

**Starting school:
Mum, don't cry**

Section Two, page 14



**Public art:
What's the point?**

Bryan Appleyard, page 17

THE INDEPENDENT

3,083

THURSDAY 5 SEPTEMBER 1996

WEATHER Dry but cloudy

40p (inc 45p)

Months early, and they're off: Major and Blair trade election blows on tax

By Anthony Bevins

John Major has accused Tony Blair of planning to slap an extra 10p in the pound tax on the lowest-paid, as both parties traded the first blows in what has already become, in effect, the 1997 election campaign.

The Tories are determined to paint Labour once again as the tax-and-spend party - remobilising the highly damaging "tax bombshell" scare of 1992, which was followed by post-election Conservative tax increases.

The speed and thoroughness with which the Tory machine yesterday pounced on Labour's long-term proposal for a 10p starting rate of tax put an end to any pretence that both sides are engaged in a phoney, pre-election skirmish. At the beginning of the week, Mr Major launched a savagely derisive attack on another key Labour policy, Scottish devolution.

Today, the assault continues with yet another hustings press conference on tax, this time from the Chancellor, Kenneth Clarke. The momentum is likely to be kept up even if the election itself does not come until next spring.

Opening yesterday's campaign with a Labour conference to woo the business community, Mr Blair offered a new partnership and new opportunities from Labour.

As evidence of "New Labour's" new approach, Mr Blair said there would be "no return to penal tax rates", adding: "It is our long-term objective to reduce high marginal rates for low-income families."

Spelling out the commitment, shadow Chancellor Gordon Brown, wrote in a glossy prospectus for business that Labour eventually wanted "a new lower starting-rate of tax of 15 pence, or preferably 10 pence in the pound."

Mr Major immediately broke into a campaign tour of Buxton, Derbyshire, to say: "The day the



Hastening the hustings: John Major and Tony Blair, among others, wooing voters in what has already become the 1997 election campaign

Labour Party become tax-cutters you will hear cats bark, and not before."

Labour was playing a classic public relations trick, he said. Each year, Conservative chancellors raised the threshold at which low-paid employees paid tax, and he suspected that what

Labour planned to do instead was to impose the new 10p rate on those people.

"They will say they are cutting and reducing taxes and the reality is they are increasing taxes, and until we have crystal clear details of what they will be doing, I think their claims will

be greeted with some hilarity."

A spokesman for Mr Brown's office dismissed his comment, saying: "That's mad. It's a gross distortion of the truth. It is the Conservative Government which has seen taxes rise, and millions more people brought into tax."

"What we want to do is to reduce the rate at which people start to pay tax, so that we can tackle the penal tax and benefit rates which are keeping people out of employment at the moment."

Treasury Ministers replied that Labour's plans would cost

£8bn. But the Chancellor blundered on to the scene with a television soundbite in which he confused the narrow-band starting rate Labour is proposing with the mainstream standard rate of 24p in the pound.

Mr Clarke said: "The electorate are more sensible than

their politicians, they're more sensible than their journalists, and the electorate know that simply to try to outbid us by saying everybody's going to have a 10p standard rate costs billions and billions of pounds, which will wreck the enterprise economy in this country."

Conservative Central Office issued a transcript of a lunchtime BBC radio interview with Mr Brown, in which he was challenged on the Tory costing of £8bn.

He said the figure had been "plucked out of the air" - but he could not provide an alternative figure as it depended on the threshold and width of the new tax-band, neither of which had been decided.

Michael Jack, Financial Secretary to the Treasury, said: "The astonishing admission that the Labour Party cannot put a price on the cost of their 10p tax band demonstrates that Labour cannot be trusted on tax."

Labour's shadow Treasury Chief Secretary, Alistair Darling, replied: "The Tories lied about Labour's proposals at the last election and they are lying again today. The Tories are the party of broken promises and lies about taxes. It is the Tories that have imposed 22 tax rises since 1992, the largest tax rises in peacetime history."

As for Labour's actual proposal, the party has already said that it is aimed at the low-paid who currently suffer tax and benefit penalties - an effective marginal tax-rate - that can take every penny of any extra pound earned.

The latest tax-benefit tables produced by the Department of Social Security show that a married couple with two children, with one partner earning £140 a week in full-time employment, would only get £1.50 more a week from a £50 pay rise. The marginal deduction rate of tax and benefit is 97p in the pound on every extra pound of income.

Labour is promising that its eventual 10p starting-rate of tax would be combined with action on the benefit "trap" - ensuring everybody's going to have a 10p standard rate costs billions and billions of pounds, which will wreck the enterprise economy in this country."

Labour PR jamboree, page 2
Leading article, page 15
Analysis, page 16

Clinton says missile attacks have taught Saddam a lesson

RUPERT CORNWELL
Washington

President Bill Clinton said yesterday that the US had achieved its mission in Iraq, after Washington launched a new wave of attacks.

Saddam Hussein now "knows there is a price to be paid for stepping over the line", the President said. "He is strategically worse off." He said that Iraqi forces had withdrawn from the north of the country, where they had been involved in factional fighting between Kurdish groups.

Despite criticism from its Gulf war allies, Washington yesterday stepped up the pressure on President Saddam. The day began with new cruise missile strikes, and ended with reports of explosions in Baghdad and anti-aircraft fire. The Pentagon insisted that it was not involved in operations over Baghdad, which is outside the zone

patrolled by US aircraft. But earlier, the US had pressed home its initial assault when 17 cruise missiles were fired from four ships at command and control targets and air defence facilities, the US said. The attacks were aimed at clearing targets unscathed by Tuesday's larger-scale attack.

"We have successfully completed the mission to attack the air defence facilities - a total of 14 air defence facilities - south of the 33rd parallel," Defense Secretary William Perry said at a joint news conference in Washington with his British counterpart Michael Portillo.

As the dust cleared from that operation, the US began patrolling the new extended no-fly zone that it has declared



President Clinton: 'Price to be paid for stepping over the line'

in southern Iraq. A Western military source said Iraq flew some 30 planes from the south shortly before the enforcement of the extended no-fly zone.

But as allied planes began to patrol, a US F-16 fighter attacked a hostile radar unit. Details of the incident, confirmed by White House officials, were sketchy, but the F-16 fired one missile after it had been locked on, or "illuminated" by the radar, attached to a mobile anti-aircraft missile unit. After the attack, the Pentagon claimed, the unit was "no longer operational", while the American warplane returned to base in Saudi Arabia unscathed.

More important, however, the clash bore out warnings from US officials that in spite of misgivings among members of the 1991 Gulf war coalition, the US was ready to carry out further strikes to ensure the safety of its aircraft in the enlarged zone - which now stretches to the 33rd parallel, almost to the southern suburbs of Baghdad. We will take "whatever action

is necessary", Mr Perry said after the latest skirmishing.

And the mixture is combustible, as President Saddam responds by seeking to establish how far Washington will go to enforce a limitation which deprives him of the use of his air force in the entire southern half of the country. Just before the radar incident, two Iraqi MiGs also approached US aircraft but turned back before crossing the 33rd parallel.

The US actions have stirred deep misgivings among some of its partners, with France reportedly refusing to patrol the new section of the no-fly zone. But Mr Clinton denied there was any friction over the operation, and said the Gulf war coalition remained solid - or at least alive. "I don't think it's dead," the President said.

Policing Saddam, page 10

Section 1

Section 2

Section 3

Section 4

QUICKLY

MoD computer plan
Highly sensitive computer operations for the Ministry of Defence could be contracted out to private companies under plans being considered by the Government. Page 6

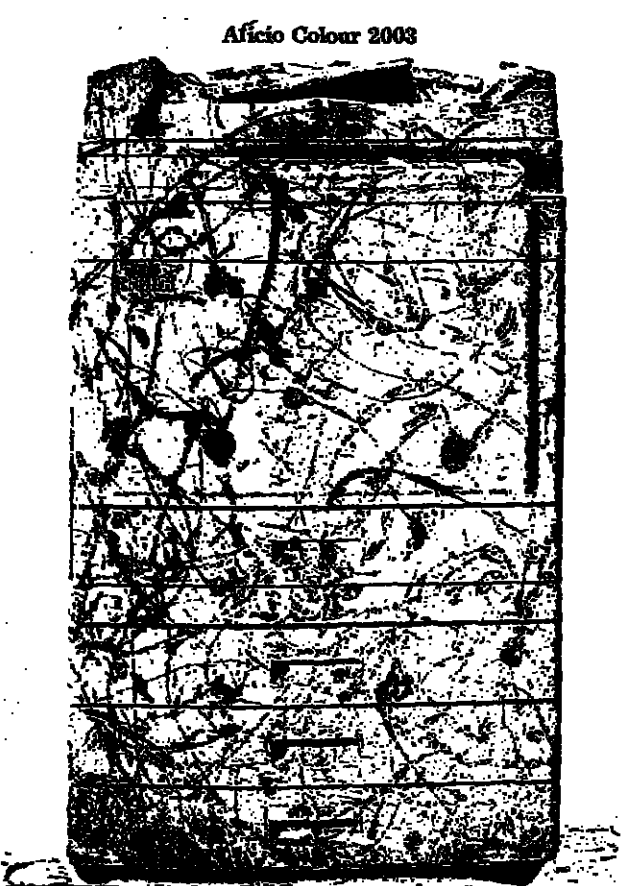
Woman wasted away
A woman who died after living the hermit-like existence of a "medieval monk", for 14 years, was found with her legs so wasted and twisted she was incapable of walking, an inquest heard. Page 4

Injunction on assets
Deutsche Morgan Grenfell, the investment bank, obtained an injunction to freeze the assets of Peter Young, the fund manager at the centre of an inquiry into "potential irregularities" that could mean a loss of at least £150m. Page 19

CONTENTS

Section 1	19-23
BUSINESS & CITY	19-23
COMMENT	15-17
CROSSWORD	23
FOREIGN NEWS	10-14
GAZETTE	13
HOME NEWS	2-9
LEADING ARTICLES	15
LETTERS	15
SHARES	22
UNIT TRUSTS	22

Section 2	6-7
ARTS	6-7
CROSSWORD	5
DILEMMAS	13-17
EDUCATION	8-12
FILM	23
GRADUATE PLUS	28-29
LIVINGS	4-5
TV & RADIO	31-32
WEATHER	29



The £9,995 Aficio Colour Copier.
It's the Jackson Pollocks.
Only cheaper.

Don't splash out if you want to make a big impression with colour. Ricoh's Aficio 2000 Series are the first laser colour copiers to start below £10,000. For more information (no Pollocks) FREEPHONE 0800 303050.

RICOH
DIGITAL COPY
REPRODUCING
Your most reliable office worker.

Take one blackboard, one piece of chalk, 1,257,787 twos and work out a world record (don't forget to subtract one)



WILLIAM HARTSTON

Yesterday was a bad day for (289,433,1). Listed in the Guinness Book of Records as the largest-known prime number, it has been knocked into numerical obscurity by (2,125,787,1), a monster of 378,632 digits which has been proven prime by a computer at Cray Research, Wisconsin. It would take about 12 pages of this newspaper to print out the number in full. The old record-holder would have run out after about nine pages. Prime numbers - those that

can be divided without remainder by no whole numbers other than one and themselves - have fascinated mathematicians for more than 2,000 years. Euclid provided the first simple proof that there is an infinity of primes. (If not, just multiply them all together and add one. The resulting number is either itself prime or has a prime divisor different from those you started with. QED.) For the last 100 years, we have even known roughly how many prime numbers there are below any given figure. (This is

given by the so-called prime number theorem, first proved in 1896.) Yet despite knowing there is no largest prime, people have continued searching for ever larger ones. In 1772, the record was held by a 10-digit number; by 1854, it had been raised to 20 digits, but the real acceleration began in the computer age. In 1971, months of computer calculations led to the discovery of a 6,002-digit prime, and in the 1980s and 90s Cray computers have been pushing the record higher almost every year.

A spokesman for Cray described prime testing as a "torture test" for supercomputers. Others might call it a waste of time. Recently, however, the task of factorising large numbers has had important applications in computer security. We had intended to print the new top prime in full, but - perhaps for reasons of security - the people at Cray have not divulged all its digits. Of course, you can work it out yourself: just take 1,257,787 twos, multiply them together and subtract one from the answer.



news

Minister warns on Islamic rally

LOUISE JURY

The Home Office yesterday warned the organisers of an Islamic fundamentalist rally planned for this weekend that any speeches inciting terrorism or violence will not be tolerated.

In an usual and strongly-worded warning, Tom Sackville, the Home Office minister, said he was concerned about the Rally For Islamic Revival due to take place in the London Arena in Docklands.

Amid fears that the event will be used by some to advocate Islamic revolution, he said the Government would "ensure

that the law in this country is upheld".

"This rally will be monitored, and anyone who breaks the law, whether by their statements or actions, will face prosecution," he said.

Incitement to racial hatred carries a maximum sentence at crown court of two years in jail and/or an unlimited fine, and in a magistrates' court of six months in jail and/or a £5,000 fine.

Egypt and Algeria are among the countries that have put pressure on the Government to ban the 1996 International Islamic Conference which is ex-

pected to draw thousands of Muslims to discuss the way forward to a single Islamic state dominating the world.

The organisers, who claim to have received threats to bomb the 12,000-seat arena and against themselves, advocate revolution to overthrow Middle East governments they consider to be corrupt.

The Home Office confirmed that fears centred on three people who have been excluded from Britain on the grounds that their presence here would "not be conducive to national security".

They were named as Sheikh

Mohammed Hussein Fadlallah, spiritual leader of Lebanon's Hizbollah, Omar Abdul-Rahman, the blind Egyptian cleric imprisoned over America's World Trade Centre bombing, and Osama Bin Laden, a Saudi national who has called for a holy war against American troops in Saudi Arabia.

Mr Sackville said: "The British Government strongly condemns any support for terrorism or calls for violence of any kind."

"The UK is second to none in its determination to fight terrorism wherever it occurs, and whatever its purpose. Ministers

have expressed their concern about plans for an Islamic group to hold a so-called Rally for Revival in London on 8 September."

The rally organisers insisted no one would break any laws. Sheikh Omar Bakri Muhammad said they had decided to withdraw the three most controversial messages from Mohammed Hussein Fadlallah, Osama Bin Laden and Omar Abdul-Rahman so there was "no legal excuse" for anyone to stop the rally going ahead.

The sheikh, who comes from the group Al-Muhajiroun, the "voice, the eyes, the ears of the

Muslims", said the messages were being distributed through the Muslim community by other means.

"We have had tremendous pressures from different directions - from the Government, from the Muslim community, even, for the security of the Muslim brothers who are coming to the conference. We decided we didn't want to show these messages."

A Scotland Yard spokesman would say only that the police was aware of the event and, as a matter of routine, had discussed arrangements with the organisers and venue managers.

SIGNIFICANT SHORTS

Distribution of Thickhead, the latest "alcopop", was suspended by Carlsberg-Tetley last night. The move is pending a re-packaging of the drink. The brewer also cancelled all advertising because it was "sufficiently concerned" that underage drinking might be encouraged. The drink, a fluorescent orange "gel carbonate" was launched on Tuesday and immediately ran into opposition from anti-alcohol campaigners, who complained that the drink would appeal to teenagers.

The Portman Group, the drinks industry watchdog, said the label directly contravened its code of conduct, by portraying a young man who could appear to be under 18 and by not displaying the word alcohol prominently enough. Ebbe Dinesen, the chief executive of Carlsberg-Tetley said last night: "We are sufficiently concerned that we have accepted their view." It will be around four weeks before the repackaged drink returns to the shelves. *Glenda Cooper*

Diplomat Robert Coghlan told customs investigators that while he was "not the Pope", he had acquired a large number of paedophilic videos unintentionally, a court heard yesterday. The former First Secretary at the British Embassy in Tokyo said a large collection of obscene videos featuring young boys he is accused of smuggling into Britain was built up by default.

In a statement read during the second day of the trial at Southwark Crown Court, the divorced father of two said it had not been possible to determine what the tapes contained before buying them. "I am not saying I bought these videos assuming they were *Gone With The Wind*. I was aware they contained pornographic material, but what I was not aware of was the precise content," Coghlan, of Islington, north London, denies he was "knowingly concerned in a fraudulent evasion of the prohibition on importation" of a quantity of "indecent or obscene material". *Jojo Moyes*

The Government was accused of "wool-pulling" to justify £400m cuts in science funding for universities. Sir Ronald Oxburgh, the new president of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, and rector of Imperial College in London, described as "nonsense" Treasury claims that the cuts in capital funding over the next three years could be replaced by money from industry under the Private Finance Initiative (PFI). "The PFI is just a way of borrowing money, and you have to raise recurrent sums of money to service the loan," he said yesterday.

The cut represents a 30 per cent reduction in funding, and has led to complaints from universities and the pressure group Save British Science that it will lead to dangerous corner-cutting in laboratories which cannot afford safety afford adequate safety equipment. *Charles Arthur*

Tougher controls on dietary supplements, including herbal remedies are needed according to the consumer magazine, *Which?* It claimed that few of the increasing number of pills and potions on the market were medicines but many made claims as if they were. Others did not tell the whole story on possible side-effects.

The supplements included ginseng which can reportedly give rise to side-effects, including high blood pressure. Ginseng should not be taken with caffeine, yet supplement brands including "Herbal Booster" and "Up Your Gas" mixed ginseng with guarana, which contains caffeine. *Which?* claimed. *Glenda Cooper*

Child abuse deaths have dropped by two-thirds in England and Wales over the past 20 years - the biggest decline in the western world, research at the University of Southampton has shown. The study does not suggest that child abuse itself has declined, Colin Fritchard, Professor of Social Work Studies, said yesterday, but that child protection services are intervening earlier and successfully reducing its most extreme consequences.

The improvement, which has shifted England and Wales from having the third worst level of child homicides in 1973 to the fifth best among 22 developed nations in 1993 has come despite two major recessions, which traditionally increase pressure on marginalised families. *Nicholas Timmins*

Home-helps working for Labour-controlled Knowsley council on Merseyside have won compensation under equality legislation after their enhanced payments for working evenings, weekends and bank holidays were cut.

Their work had been rated similarly to mainly male workers, such as refuse drivers, none of whom had suffered such reductions. Unison, the public service union, claimed 200 care workers, who had been threatened with dismissal, would receive up to £500,000 in back pay. But the council said the figure was substantially less. *Barrie Clement*

The skipper of the world's oldest active square-rigged sailing vessel, the *Maria Annamaria*, appeared in court yesterday on charges arising from the ship's wrecking on the Cornish coast last year and the deaths of three crew. The hearing, at Bodmin Magistrates' Court, will decide whether there is sufficient evidence for 55-year-old Mark Litchfield, of Maidstone, Kent, to face trial by jury at crown court.

The 137-year-old wooden vessel broke up on rocks near Padstow. The hearing is likely to last up to two weeks.

Only one consumer in more than 1,000 could correctly identify the government minister who looks after their interests, a survey for BBC1's Watchdog programme has found. Researchers took a life-size cardboard cut-out of consumer minister John Taylor to the world's busiest shopping thoroughfare, Oxford Street in London.

Suggestions as to the identity of the mystery cut-out ranged from actor Bob Hoskins to former Russian leader Mikhail Gorbachev. When Mr Taylor, MP for Solihull, was asked about his achievements, he said: "I think I have contributed to the area of unit pricing. I have contributed to ladder safety, where there are 44,000 injuries per year from people falling off ladders and step ladders - and we're working very hard on fireworks." *Glenda Cooper*

A melting moment for Naomi as wax twin makes a catwalk debut



Naomi Campbell unveils her wax double in London yesterday at the Fashion Caté, which she owns with model friends Claudia Schiffer, Elle MacPherson and Christy Turlington. Ms Campbell is the first 'supermodel' to have her image moulded by Madame Tussaud's and set among more than 400 waxen celebrities in the famous museum. Photograph: Edward Sykes

Blair's business jamboree becomes PR man's festival

MICHAEL HARRISON

Half the delegates who attended Labour's much-hyped and heavily trailed conference in central London yesterday, to hear the party leadership set out its manifesto for business, were not businessmen at all but public-relations executives, academics, trade unionists, diplomats - or Labour MPs and officials.

Tony Blair, the Labour leader, opened the event by saying it was a "particular pleasure to see so many distinguished business people gathered at a Labour business conference". He was told, he added, that 92 of Britain's top-100 companies were represented.

The reality was a little different. Of the 365 delegates who paid £470 a head to listen to Mr Blair and eight of his front-bench colleagues set out their vision for industry and the economy, 82 were PR men and women. Nineteen were diplomats, 29 were union representatives, academics or members of training and enterprise councils and 46 were Labour MPs, MEPs or party members.

An examination of the official attendance list suggests that less than a third of the companies that make up the FTSE-100 Index were represented, and only a handful of chief executives of large companies were billed as attending. Of those, Gerry Robinson of Granada, Lord Blyth of Boots, Liam Strong of Sears and John Rose of Rolls-Royce, turned up only for the breakfast briefing, and one, Norman Askew of East Midlands Electricity, did not make it at all.

Disappointment at the calibre of those attending was summed up by one delegate, who said: "After all the advance billing, and given the Labour party line-up on display, the attendance is very poor, both in quantity and quality."

Those who did attend heard Mr Blair spell out five pledges to business: a promise that inflation would be kept low and tough rules imposed on spending and borrowing; a commitment to place Britain at the centre of Europe in a role that is outward-looking and anti-protectionist; better education standards and training for those



A pat on the back for John Prescott from Blair yesterday

in work; support for small businesses and help to tackle late payment; and a new partnership between government and business to revitalise Britain's infrastructure.

Mr Blair's speech and those of his shadow-cabinet colleagues, including the deputy leader John Prescott, were greeted with polite applause. According to some delegates the muted response was explained by the fact that they had heard it all before. Mr Blair's speech, right down to the joke he used to warm up the audience, was a virtual carbon copy of the one he gave in July to the annual conference of the British Chambers of Commerce annual convention in Birmingham.

The mood was summed up by John Smith, the director of regulation for Anglian Water, who said: "Inevitably we have reservations about some areas of policy, such as the windfall tax. [But] ... this time Labour has made much more effort to conduct a dialogue with business and therefore its policies reflect much more understanding of business."

Boardroom U-turn, page 19

Politics proves the sticking point

ALEX SELL

Labour's plans for business were met with a distinctly lukewarm response by industry leaders. Deciding it "more a political meeting" many walked away none the wiser.

"There are a lot of unanswered questions," Sean Murphy, managing director of Japanese bank Sanwa said. Alcor Reed, chairman of Reed Personnel Services, said: "I would have been naive to expect it [de-

tail] and they would be naive to offer it."

Opinion was split on the usefulness of the conference. Those seeking detail on policies such as duty on fuel and windfall taxes came away content, those seeking explanation of how Labour would control the financial instability of change of government or clarification over EMU membership and the level of a minimum wage were disappointed.

Andrea Cone-Farran, chair-

woman of the Wire Station, an interactive business communications business, said that her experience of national minimum wage in Australia had shown it to be futile. Any firm that employs unfair rates of pay, she said, tends to fail to retain staff and secure productivity. "Natural forces rather than the formal impositions Labour flirts with tend to dictate pay and productivity," she said.

This view was echoed by Michael Moselberg, senior di-

rector of project finance at Nikko (UK). Attempts by a Labour Government to legislate on corporate governance issues such as those recommended by Greenbury would be met with resistance and resentment, he said. Intervention and tinkering with corporate taxation would simply find investment being directed elsewhere.

On other tax issues Mr Moselberg thought Labour would not be radical.

Should
murderers
suffer
for

years or
minutes?

The death penalty. Is it legalised murder?
Or is it justifiable revenge? Find out Polly Toynbee's
view in this week's Radio Times.

RadioTimes

IT'S NOT WHAT YOU EXPECT.

DAVID McINTYRE
Ireland Correspondent

Opinions differed yesterday on whether or not Tuesday night's assassination of a leading figure in the Irish National Liberation Army meant the end of the vicious feud which has claimed six lives this year.

The man shot dead in Lurgan, Co Armagh, Hugh Torney,

was the leader of one of the two warring factions within the organisation. The leader of the other camp, Gino Gallagher, was shot dead in January, reportedly on Torney's orders.

Torney's death may bring an end to the blood-letting, with each side reckoning that honour has been satisfied. Or one side or other in this particularly unpredictable group may

continue to seek vengeance, a tendency which has been one of the primary characteristics of INLA members.

The risks involved in being an INLA member are the stuff of many bad-taste jokes in Belfast. They are illustrated by the fact that, of 27 defendants in a major INLA trial in the mid-1980s, eight have since been killed. One of these was killed by loy-

alists; the rest all died in internal feuding. The Sinn Féin spokesman Mitchell McLaughlin called on the INLA factions to disband, declaring: "Neither of these two groups has any constructive contribution to make to the struggle for justice and the search for peace."

Torney's republican career stretched back to his teens. In 1971 he was injured during a

gun battle with troops in west Belfast, and in 1973 he was jailed on an arms charge. Over the years he escaped several loyalist attempts to kill him, and survived a number of murder bids by INLA associates.

He spent several years on remand on murder and other charges in the mid-1980s but was acquitted when the "supergrass" trials collapsed. When

shot dead he was on the run, having last year skipped bail for the Irish Republic, where he faced trial for an arms offence.

An SDLP delegation yesterday met Irish ministers in Dublin in advance of the multi-party talks which reopen in Belfast next week. The Irish foreign minister, Dick Spring, said renewed confidence was needed after a summer of unrest.

هكذا من الأصل

The clock moves on, but time stands still for Gilbert and George

Britain's most controversial pop artists have outlasted the city around them, writes Jonathan Glancey

On the left, the artists Gilbert and George on the roof of their Spitalfields eyrie; on the right, the artists Gilbert and George on the roof of their Spitalfields eyrie. Eagle-eyed readers will, however, spot a number of differences between these two photographs, both taken by Herbie Knott.

The brickwork of Gilbert and George's Dickensian chimney stacks appear to have been repainted (right). The Fifties-style suits they sport on the right are surely more sombre than those on the left. The clock of Christ Church, Spitalfields, which lies on the edge of the City, registers twelve o'clock on the left and twenty past six on the right.

The giveaway to the difference between Knott's twin portraits is the skyline brooding behind the parapet of this London rooftop: broad-shouldered, Brobdingnagian, the ambitious Broadgate development fills in a background that, in the left-hand picture, is still composed of individual buildings, including one of the 400ft towers of the Barbican.

The two pictures are taken at the same time, same place, 10 years and one day apart. Knott's earlier portrait slightly predated the first issue of *The Independent*, which celebrates its tenth anniversary next month.

The Yuppie boom was at full volume and Broadgate had yet to rise the length of Bishopsgate, the north-south axis that divides the photocratic City of London from shadowy, penny-pinched Spitalfields, which was built by Huguenot refugees in the 1720s. The clock on Hawksmoor's peerless church had not been working for as long as anyone could remember. As you can see, the clock is running on time today; the church is in the process of a protracted restoration due to be completed in time for the millennium.

Spitalfields itself has changed radically since 1986. Then, the old fruit and vegetable market was still in full flow, the glowing hearth around which houses like Gilbert and George's huddled for warmth and security. But the market has since moved to a hi-tech warehouse in the outer wastelands of Hackney further east.

But the one thing that has remained constant over a



turbulent decade is Gilbert and George's standing as two of the most controversial British artists and their devotion to the Market Cafe in Fournier Street where they have breakfast every day.

Since their debut as human sculptures at the end of the Sixties, Gilbert and George have always been enigmatic artists. Their most recent sale, of a work entitled *Bloody Life No 4*, returned them £85,000 in June.

They courted adverse criticism with a remarkable continuum of gigantic photographic works that featured the rough and rude side of working-class London life. In Gilbert and George's imagery, testosterone-

fuelled boys, many of them skinheads, were mixed up with East End skylines and scrawled across with a brutal Anglo-Saxon vocabulary designed to provoke.

Even so, these brutal works

were beautifully realised and, seen together in major European and American art galleries, had much of the quality of great stained glass. Their most recent show was a major retrospective this summer in

Bologna, northern Italy; their latest work, currently in the making, will be first seen in Paris next year.

George (on the right of the two pictures) describes the talented duo as "just a pair of

working class wankers", but they have proved to be the unchanging anchor around which the fortunes of changing Spitalfields continue to rise and fall.

Brian Appleyard, page 17

Stalker terrifies teacher's widow



Followed: Frances Lawrence, whose husband, Philip, died protecting a pupil last year

JASON BENNETTO
Crime Correspondent

The widow of Philip Lawrence, the headmaster stabbed to death outside his school, is being harassed by a stalker.

The man has been following Frances Lawrence, 47, for several months and on one occasion reportedly leapt out in front of her wearing a hood while she was in her garden.

Mrs Lawrence is the latest victim of a form of harassment which affects hundreds of women. The problem has become so acute that the Government has promised to introduce a new law which could result in stalkers being jailed for up to five years.

Mrs Lawrence and her four children won nationwide respect for the way they dealt with the murder of her husband in north west London last December.

Describing the effects of being stalked, she reportedly said: "This whole thing has made life more difficult for me. It seems ridiculous but, as you can imagine, it is pretty awful to know there is someone out there watching all the time."

"I have reported this to the police and they have been wonderful. But this man is very clever and shy."

Speaking about her encounter with the stalker, Mrs Lawrence said: "It was terrifying. I went into the back garden one day recently and he sprang out right in front of me. He was wearing a hood over his head which made it worse. He stared at me as we stood face to face."

Scotland Yard yesterday confirmed it was investigating the incident.

Mr Lawrence's death, as he tried to protect a pupil from a gang of youths outside St

George's Roman Catholic School in Meida Vale, provoked nationwide revulsion and led to proposals to tighten up laws on knives, and a weapons amnesty.

Several days after his murder, Mrs Lawrence sent a message to her husband's pupils to help create a world where "goodness is never again destroyed by evil".

A 15-year-old youth is due to go on trial later this month charged with murdering Mr Lawrence.

The issue of stalking was highlighted earlier this week when it emerged that the first stalker jailed for inflicting psychological grievous bodily harm on a victim was still trying to harass her from his prison cell.

Anthony Burstow, 36, a former chief petty officer, was jailed after harassing Tracey Sant, 28, who had worked with

him at a Gosport naval depot. Burstow, now in Bullingdon prison, near Oxford, was discovered trying to write to her. The letters were seized.

Under government plans, which will finish their consultation process next week, a civil measure will allow victims to seek an injunction against the person responsible. Breaching the injunction would be a criminal offence, punishable by up to five years in jail.

The Government is also proposing a new criminal offence of intentionally or unintentionally causing people to fear for their safety. It will be an offence whether or not the stalker intended to have this effect.

Anyone found guilty of committing such an offence will face a punishment of five years in prison, an unlimited fine, or both.

The menace you cannot escape

A stalker's victim describes the devastating effect that a perverse fixation has had upon on her life

I could not imagine it happening to me. I still can't see an obvious reason why the stalker became fixated as I'm neither a celebrity nor strikingly attractive. However, as rapists and attackers are often known to their victims, so too was I introduced to my stalker professionally.

At first, he merely created an uncomfortable atmosphere by gazing at me intently and hovering around without actually speaking. Gradually, there was no getting away from the fact that he was building up a picture of our relationship that was purely fictitious.

And he built up the image rapidly. "You and I are perfect together, aren't we? Do you know what I want to do to

you?" I would walk away as he continued his litany of fantasies. Even then, it was annoying rather than menacing but the darker side of his personality didn't take too long to emerge. Ignoring him and pretending not to notice his presence infuriated him.

He would relieve this by frantically leaving a succession of threatening messages on my answerphone, often sounding drunk and calling in the early hours of the morning.

Distressing though this was, it was nothing compared to the one time I accidentally picked up the phone. I had begun to

screen all my calls, but one Sunday evening I was caught off guard when expecting a call from abroad.

The amount of filth he packed into a 30-second call before I put the phone down left me in tears. When I pulled myself together, I decided I had to take a course of action.

Avoiding him wherever possible meant changing the sort of jobs I was doing.

I started taping his phone messages so that I had something concrete to take to the police but instead of feeling relieved, it left me more wary. Why did he need to do this?

He is successful, has good connections and most people on first meeting him find him charming. A far cry from the image of a lonely, frustrated individual cut off from society.

At a party we both attended, I tried to creep away without him noticing, but he was too quick for me.

"Where do you think you are going?" he said, grabbing my wrists. Yet eerily, he continued smiling so that from a distance no one would notice anything untoward. "Don't think you're leaving now. You're coming back with me."

I approached the police

about what I should do next. Keeping evidence, they said, was a good start. Noting times and places when he followed me on the street and to record incidents of verbal abuse or intimidation.

While the fear remains that he may reappear at any time, short of taking an injunction out on him to ensure that he is not allowed within a certain distance of my presence, the next best thing I can do is to make sure that our paths don't meet wherever possible.

Most worrying is that deep down I feel somehow responsible. If I had handled it differently... if I had shouted at him... but there is no guidebook on how to deal with people like this.



PUNCH, EVERY FRIDAY. THE MAGAZINE THAT UPSETS PEOPLE.

CALL FREE ON 0800 592 439 FOR DETAILS OF SUBSCRIPTION OFFER.

IND0509

edited by David Lister

Pressure of exams puts young off the arts

DAVID LISTER

Girls are ahead of boys in artistic activity both in and out of school - but both sexes lose interest when the pressures of GCSE examinations loom.

A survey of 4,532 11- to 16-year-olds in 192 state schools, to be published by the Arts Council today, shows that the demands of academic examinations causes artistic involvement to drop radically at the age of 15. Participation is lower for 15- and 16-year-olds than for any other age group.

This first survey of its kind, by the research group Mori for the Arts Council, shows that girls are more likely than boys to be involved in arts activities (93 per cent compared with 89 per cent).

The only area where boys do more is in computer graphics (48 per cent, against 28 per cent of girls).

Gender distinctions are reinforced by single-sex schools. For example, in all-girls schools 55 per cent of pupils have done some dance in their lessons; in all-boys schools only 7 per cent. Participation in drama and singing in a choir was also higher in girls' schools.

Outside school far more girls write stories and poetry (41 per cent of girls, 28 per cent of boys), and read novels (49 per cent of girls, 34 per cent of boys).

The main variation in the general statistics across the country is in Wales, where pupils are almost twice as likely to be a member of a choir (25 per cent compared with a national average of 13 per cent).

Overall levels of artistic activity among teenagers in the North of England are slightly below the national average.

The survey shows that 9 out of 10 school pupils are active in arts activities in school, and just as many out of school. The most

frequently undertaken activities in school time were drawing, sketching and painting, (76 per cent of pupils), with writing stories and poetry (66 per cent) and acting (58 per cent) not far behind.

Outside school, 62 per cent carried on drawing, sketching and painting and 41 per cent read novels and poetry. Only a quarter continued their interest in drama.

Nearly a half of all pupils play a musical instrument, with as many playing outside school as in. Younger children are much more likely to be playing, with learning peaking at the age of 12. Only one-third of pupils in school receive free tuition in a musical instrument.

As for attendance at arts events, cinema is predictably the most attended venue (72 per cent). Nearly one-third of pupils had been to a theatre, and one in five to a museum or historic house.

But, despite the high number painting and drawing, only 12 per cent had ever visited an art gallery.

The report concludes that while participation in arts activities is high, girls are more likely to participate than boys, especially in dance and creative writing.

Another key conclusion is that a very low level of participation (46 per cent) is for arts activities taking place using school facilities out of school hours. Both facilities and staff are under-utilised out of hours, the report notes.

Jane O'Brien, senior policy researcher at the Arts Council, commented: "Indeed, if any area for potential improvement were recognised, it would be using school facilities out of school."

Secondary School Pupils and the Arts: The Arts Council of England; 14 Great Peter Street, London SW1: £7.50.



Double time: Kirsty McCahon, bassist with the Opera Factory orchestra, at rehearsals for the company's production of Mozart's opera *The Magic Flute*, which opens at the Queen Elizabeth Hall at London's South Bank tonight. The opera has been put in a circus setting and the orchestra of 15 players will play on stage. Photograph: Laurie Lewis

Rattle unlocks key to modern music

MARIANNE MACDONALD
Media Correspondent



Sir Simon: 'No sense in which this music is easy'

Sir Simon Rattle yesterday launched a television crusade for the appreciation of some of our culture's most difficult musical works - the orchestral compositions of the 20th century.

He has written and presented the most ambitious series ever to have been commissioned on the subject, *Leaving Home*, a seven-part series which was unveiled by Channel 4 yesterday.

The move is part of its bid to explore the arts in a more rigorous and intellectual way, an approach which goes hand in hand with Sir Simon's own championing of the challenging music of what he calls our

"wonderful, infuriating century".

But the conductor who, over the last 16 years, has made the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra into an international force, admitted that the series, starting on 29 September, would not be an easy ride, even for dedicated lovers of classical music.

Among the works featured are Schoenberg's *Transfigured Night*, Stravinsky's *Elektra*, Webern's *Five Orchestral Pieces*, Mahler's *Symphony No 7*, Shostakovich's *Symphony No 4*, and Bartók's *Rural Fragments*.

"This stuff takes time," Sir Simon said. "There's no sense in which this music is easy. What I hope to do is give people a

window into why it sounds as it does. It is very hard to move straight from Wagner to the most complicated music of our time."

The series starts with an exploration of the music of de-caying, turn-of-the-century Vienna, and goes on to study how orchestral music shook itself free of rhythm, how the Eastern composers Shostakovich and Bartók evaded state control of their work, the influence of America and the post-war innovations of Stravinsky, Boulez and Stockhausen in building new music for a new Europe.

In the last programme, Sir Simon selects music by Berio, Henze and Birtwistle, as well as some of the emerging music

from eastern Europe, as indicating trends for the future.

The series, costing more than £2m, originated with Melvyn Bragg four years ago. "It presented real technical and moral problems," said Helen Sprott, Channel 4's commissioning editor for the performing arts. "Do you allow people to speak over the music? How much of a piece of music do you play? What images do you show?"

But the medium also offered a way of increasing the accessibility of the music through the use of contemporary artwork, photographs and news footage. "So many intelligent people say to me: 'I'm finding this music tough, what's the problem?'" said Sir Simon. "People are not willing to

take the amount of effort and listen. If you go through a gallery of modern art you can look at a painting or turn away immediately. Music takes time."

In his view, orchestral music is turning back to popular culture as the century ends. "There is a return to more communicative music but also to more spiritual music. This is a very, very interesting time."

The last 100 years had been a time of unparalleled and concerted violence and that was reflected in the music, he added. "There is no way a great composer can keep himself apart from the time. This is a century where things have moved faster and grown at a more extraordinary rate than ever."

Leading article, page 15

NO MINUTES OF
FREE
PEAK CALLS
EVERY MONTH

NO WORTH OF FREE
CALLS EVERY MONTH
FOR 14 MONTHS.
HIGH MEANS OVER
MINUTES OF FREE
PEAK CALLS!

Callnet
011 222 222

Mobile Phone
011 222 222

Mobile Phone
011 222 222

Mobile Phone
011 222 222

Mobile Phone
011 222 222

Mobile Phone
011 222 222

Mobile Phone
011 222 222

Conti Desk
Mahogany Effect
£44.99

Conti Desk Return
Mahogany Effect
with castors
£19.99

Conti Filing Cabinet
Mahogany Effect
with castors
£44.99

Conti Bookcase
Mahogany Effect
Large
£36.99 Save £8
Small
£24.99 Save £7

Curver File Box
£9.95

Magazine File 3 pack
£2.99

Conti Workstation
Mahogany Effect
£34.99

Beech Veneer Workstation
with castors
£59.99

Homebase
will make you an office
you can't refuse.

SAINSBURY'S HOMEBASE
HOUSE AND GARDEN CENTRES
Good ideas cost less at Homebase.

Monday-Thursday 8am-8pm • Friday 8am-9pm • Saturday 8am-8pm • Sunday 10am-4pm.
All sizes are approximate and not to scale. Merchandise subject to availability. Not all products will be available at the following Homebase stores: Maidstone - St. Peter's Street, Ayr - High Street and Perth - George Street. Opening times may vary. Please call 0181-300 0200 for details of your nearest store. *Europe stores in Scotland which open 9am - 6pm.

OR get up to £35,000
home contents cover with
no complicated
calculations.

Interested? Call
0800 333 800

EAGLE STAR Direct

Phone for a free home insurance quote weekdays 8am-8pm, Saturday 9am-2pm. We regret that we are unable to quote for rented unfurnished accommodation.

8
news

A concrete folly, a slimy old bridge or an international masterpiece by the Corbusier of County Durham?

NIGEL BURNHAM

A concrete folly, derided by those living nearby as a "slimy old bridge", has been proclaimed by architectural watchdogs as an "internationally important masterpiece".

The Pasmore Pavilion, designed by Victor Pasmore, a major figure of the post-war British avant-garde, was conceived as "an architecture and sculpture of purely abstract form through which to walk, in which to linger and on which to play".

Built in 1963, it was the artist's post-modernist contribution to Peterlee, Co Durham, where he was appointed consulting director of urban design.

The "Corbusier of Co Durham", now 87 but then the Master of Painting at Durham University, had wanted to bring some cheer to the lives of miners relocated from pit villages.

But to residents of Sunny Blunts estate, the pavilion and the polluted pond it spans has brought only misery as a target for vandalism and a meeting place for teenagers with a predilection for *al fresco* sex.

Easington council feels the same way. It is objecting to English Heritage's recommendation to Virginia Bottomley, the Secretary of State for National Heritage, that the sculpture should be listed Grade II*. It has asked the Government's Conservation Agency to abandon its plans to list the sculpture and assist instead in its demolition.

Joan Maslin, councillor for

Sunny Blunts, is the pavilion's fiercest critic, having campaigned for 14 years for its removal and lobbied the Prince of Wales, Sir Jimmy Savile and the Army for their help.

"The name Victor Pasmore means nothing in Peterlee," she said. "All we know is that we have a heap of dirty, slimy concrete covered in graffiti, which youths climb up to have sex on and from, which to urinate on passers-by."

"Nobody here wants it and if English Heritage does, they should take it somewhere else and list it there."

Elain Harwood, an English Heritage historian, insists that the sculpture is a national treasure which needs to be restored and maintained.

"It's an absolutely unique work of considerable international importance," she said. "It was an extraordinary thing to put in the heart of a new town. There isn't another piece of public sculpture like it anywhere in the country - neither Pasmore nor any other artist did anything like it again."

Ms Harwood said she was "disappointed" that the pavilion was so unloved.

"It's the one thing that makes people go there," she said. "We are trying to put the town on the map and they're saying, No!"

Pasmore, who said on a visit to Peterlee in 1982 that the vandalism had humanised his pavilion, demonstrating its acceptance by the community, could not be contacted.



Not in our backyard: People in Peterlee want to demolish the Pasmore Pavilion, which has been recommended for listing by English Heritage

Photograph: Richard Rayner

Save money by hanging around the house.

DO IT ALL
Offer of
the Month!



£3.99
each
Superfresco White
Blown Vinyl
(patterns 15017, 15008, 15010)
WAS £5.99



DIA
Helpline

Free help and advice
7 days a week
0800 436 436



Project
Guides

Over 60 free guides
to lead you through
most DIY tasks



Bonus
Card

Free £5 bonus
voucher for every
£100 spent



Decorating
Adviser

Help and advice
available in-store



DO IT ALL
LET'S DO UP BRITAIN!

Offer subject to availability.

Money talks as £70 informers turn in burglars

PATRICIA WYNN DAVIES
Legal Affairs Editor

The cultivation of networks of informers could be a key weapon in the fight to cut burglaries, says the Audit Commission, the local authority spending watchdog.

An initiative to recruit and reward informants has helped lead to the biggest increase in clear-up rates for burglaries in one force, the commission said yesterday.

The scheme, run by Hertfordshire Constabulary, involves the systematic use of informants at an average payment of around £70 per arrest, and is highlighted in a report by the commission as an example of good practice that other forces should follow.

Hertfordshire increased its clear-up rate for house burglaries by 14 per cent between 1993 and 1995, the biggest improvement by any force in England and Wales. Every suspect interviewed is also approached as a possible source

of information on other crimes and criminals. Prison visits are seen as a prime opportunity to recruit informants.

The commission found that the number of registered informants had tripled to 900 since 1993, even though those people who had ceased to be active were more systematically weeded from the register. It estimates that the intelligence provided led to an average of two arrests a day in 1995.

Around two-thirds of Hertfordshire's informants are run by uniformed officers, a rarity before 1993. Many have received specialist training on informant handling.

Detective Superintendent Alan Shannon, head of crime management with the force, said intelligence-led policing including the cultivation of informants and the targeting of persistent offenders by surveillance squads had been crucial to the force's success.

Kate Flannery, a member of the commission's senior management, said: "Some chief

officers are still a little wary of allowing inexperienced officers to try to control informants. There are obvious risks."

Other policing trends praised in the report include the targeting of prolific offenders in operations such as the Metropolitan Police's Operation Bumblebee, more proactive policing and assigning responsibility for most investigations to local units.

Publication of the report came as Met officers arrested 329 people in London under the Bumblebee initiative. In a series of dawn raids police recovered a substantial quantity of stolen goods along with two pistols, CS gas canisters and drugs.

About 1,700 officers took part, searching 600 addresses. Ian Johnston, an assistant commissioner, said that since Bumblebee was launched in June 1993 about 34,000 people had been arrested for burglary. Residential burglaries had fallen by 5 per cent in the past year while the detection rate was up 24 per cent.

'Jackanory' still has a story for today's child

MARIANNE MACDONALD
Media Correspondent

The classic children's story-telling programme *Jackanory* - suspended by the BBC last year - is to return as "heritage" repeats.

Jackanory Gold, with stories told by Dame Judi Dench, Bernard Cribbins and the late Kenneth Williams, will be part of this autumn's schedule on Children's BBC. Stories are still important to modern children, Anna Home, head of BBC Children's Programmes, said.

Last year, when production of the story-telling programme ceased after 29 years, the BBC said stories from books had "a limited appeal" as modern children were more interested in youth soaps such as *Byker Grove* and magazine shows such as *Live and Kicking*.

However, Ms Home laid emphasis on the classic drama in yesterday's autumn schedule.

A Sunday tea-time dramatisation of Mark Twain's *The Prince and The Pauper* stars Keith Michell playing Henry VIII for the fifth time in his career.

Launching the BBC's autumn children's season, Ms Home said there will also be new series of old favourites *The Queen's Nose*, telling the adventures of feisty Harmony Parker, and *The Demon Headmaster*, the baddie who wants to



Back to basics: Dame Judi Dench and Bernard Cribbins will be on screen again with *Jackanory Gold*



take over the world. "One of the things which was proven last year was the success of *The Demon Headmaster* and *The Queen's Nose* is the way today's children are deeply traditional and enjoy good stories well told," she said.

"It surprised all of us. We did a couple of shows last year which were computer and electronic and they were not particularly popular, and there's a show on ITV called *Bad Influence*, again to do with new technology, and that wasn't very successful."

"In a way, that restores my faith, in as much as *The Demon Headmaster* and *The Queen's Nose* couldn't be more traditional in terms of children's

books, yet there's a real appetite for them. There's a kind of feeling that today's children are only interested in soundbites and quick fixes, that they could sit down and concentrate on a story was very cheering."

The BBC's decision to go back to basics includes Sir Arthur Quiller Couch's children's story *True Tilda*, in which 10-year-old Morgan Bell becomes a circus girl.

Old favourites continuing include *Blue Peter*, *Byker Grove*, *Newsround*, *Grange Hill* and *Record Breakers*. Asked why so few new series had been commissioned, Ms Home said: "These are back by popular demand. You don't get rid of your bankers."

هكذا من الأصل

Secret face of China's lost civilisation



Archaeologists hail discovery of ancient culture as 'greatest find of the century'

DAVID KEYS
Archaeology Correspondent

Chinese archaeologists have unearthed a previously unknown ancient civilisation, about 3,500 years old. This is the first discovery of ancient urban civilisation on this scale for more than a century.

They have found well over 1,000 jade and bronze items including some of the world's strangest sculptures. ET-style masks with eyes on stalks and heads with giant ears.

Archaeologists are stunned by the discovery and baffled as to the identity of the ancient people who created this glittering lost culture. Although the civilisation flourished in what is now western China, it does not appear to have been culturally or ethnically ancestral to modern mainstream Chinese culture. Instead, it may be distantly related to either the Tibeto-Burman tribes or the much less numerous Austronesian peoples (cousins to the Pacific Polynesians) who both still inhabit parts of western China.

Details have been emerging only over the past decade, following the discovery in 1986 and 1988, at Sanxingdui, in China's Sichuan province, of sacrificial pits filled with jade and bronze treasures. In-depth scientific examination and Chinese language publication of the material is still in progress, and China has only now allowed the major finds out of the country for the first time for a spectacular three-and-a-half-month exhibition at the British Museum from 13 September.



Mystery man: A bronze figure found in a pit (below) at Sanxingdui, from about the 13th to 10th century BC

Photographs: China Cultural Relics Promotion Center/British Museum

Most of the finds - bronze heads and statues, ritual equipment and jade treasures - have been unearthed inside a massive ceremonial walled city, covering almost a square mile.

In its heyday - 3,600 to 3,100 years ago - the city, with its residential districts and major public buildings, probably had a population of between 10,000 and 20,000 and boasted four miles of enormous defensive ramparts. Made of 50 million cubic feet of rammed earth, they were 130ft wide, around 35ft high, and were topped by a brick wall and pierced by gateways.

It is likely that the metropolis was not only the capital of a substantial kingdom, but was also an important centre of religious pilgrimage.

Nearly all the bronze and jade

treasures have been found in a series of deep sacrificial pits, next to what were probably temples, built on vast earthen platforms. The identity of the gods which were being offered these sacrifices is as great a mystery as the identity of the ancient people themselves. However, a detailed analysis of the finds so far suggests that this lost civilisation held elephants, birds of prey, and the concept of the tree in great reverence.

The biggest sacrificial pit, dating from 1100BC, contained 500 bronze, jade and stone treasures arranged in three layers. The top layer consisted exclusively of elephant tusks, while the bottom layer was made up of bronze birds and animals, small bronze animal face masks, small jade and stone im-

plements, seashells, and fragments of bronze trees.

However, it was the middle layer which yielded the most spectacular items - 41 human-like heads, 15 human-like masks (including two with "telescopic" eyes on stalks), a series of bronze wheels, a dozen ritual bronze vessels, parts of several bronze trees and a 5ft 7in bronze statue of a man standing on a 3ft pedestal, decorated with elephant images.

Archaeologists world-wide are now beginning to grapple with the mystery of the Chinese discovery - and its implications. Who were the people who ran this amazing civilisation? Were they kings or priests? And, most tantalising of all, are there other, major, lost civilisations still awaiting discovery?



Golden lure of whisky galore

STEVE BOGGAN

A Scottish teacher is inviting thousands of people to take part in a treasure hunt across the Highlands and islands in search of precious golden booty - 1,000 bottles of rare malt whisky, worth at least £30,000.

Richard Henderson has planted clues to the whereabouts of the treasure in a new book about the fictional wanderings of the Prince of Wales. And if no one finds it by Christmas 1999, he intends to invite all his treasure seekers to a huge millennium Hogmanay to drink the lot.

Mr Henderson, a well-known climber, got the inspiration for his hunt from 15th Williams, whose clues to the location of a golden hare in the early 1980s in *Masquerade* had Mr Henderson, and hundreds of others, digging up parts of the countryside for years.

The book, *Chasing Charlie*, proceeds from which will go to the Prince's Scottish Youth Business Trust, involves a group of children and their teacher in a search for the lost Loch Arkiaig Treasure, a consignment of gold that vanished in 1746. Along the route taken by Bonnie Prince Charlie 250 years ago, they meet a mysterious man, nicknamed Wiggy, who is intended to be the Prince of Wales.

Mr Henderson said: "The hunt for treasure, once begun, gets a strange hold on you. Always, something draws you on; some lift and splendour - that prospect of a moment of discovery, a moment of triumph. I thought, well, instead of a hare, my book can be about an heir, and the discerning reader will be drawn by the gleaming lure of whisky."

Mr Henderson wrote to the Prince about his idea and, on learning that malt whisky is the heir's favourite drink, 109 distilleries donated 1,000 bottles including 1948 Strathgairn, 30-year Springbank, 1956 Mortlach and 50-year-old Glenfarches. Some copies of the book will be given away in bars along the west coast of Scotland. Others can be obtained for £5 from Black Raven Publishing, Berkhamsted Castle, HP4 1LL.

Quality + Service + Price = Value



P5-120 MULTIMEDIA

- Intel® 120MHz Pentium® Processor
- 16MB EDO RAM
- 256KB Pipeline Burst Cache
- 3.5" Diskette Drive
- Toshiba® Eight-Speed CD-ROM
- Western Digital® 2GB EIDE Hard Drive
- Creative Labs® Sound Card and Aha! Lansing ACS40 Speakers
- 512MB DRAM, 64 Bit Graphic Accelerator
- 15" Vivitron® Colour Monitor
- Desktop/Mini Tower Case
- Windows® 95 105 Key Keyboard & Mouse
- Microsoft® Windows 95
- MS Generation Software Bundle
- Games Bundle
- MS Encarta® '96 (US version)
- SuperScope Virtual Reality Software
- 3 Year Limited Warranty

£1149 (£1384.15 inc VAT and Delivery)

GATEWAY2000

0800 39 2000

http://www.g2k.com

Gateway 2000, Clonsilla Industrial Estate, Dublin 17, Ireland.

Configuration and prices are subject to change without notice.

©1996 Gateway 2000 Europe. Copyright, Intel and other registered trademarks of Gateway 2000, Inc. The Intel Inside logo, Intel, Pentium and Pentium Pro are trademarks or registered trademarks of Intel Corporation.

Gateway 2000 is a registered trademark of Gateway 2000 Europe. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners.

OR spread your insurance payments over a year.

Interest free. Interested?

Call 0800 333 800

for a motor or home quote.



Phone for free quote weekdays 8am-6pm, Saturday 9am-2pm. A written credit quotation is available on request. Motor insurance not available in Northern Ireland. We regret that we cannot quote for rented unfurnished accommodation.

POLICING SADDAM

Iraqis withdraw, leaving Kurdish capital to lick its wounds

The new Iraqi Kurdish rulers of Arbil yesterday proved that the last Iraqi armoured vehicles had withdrawn from the city. They showed foreign reporters a bruised population of one million people who are now short of food, must walk miles for water and have no electricity at all.

The last Iraqis withdrew overnight from around the blasted shell of the parliament building to take up position some 10 miles south-east of Arbil, near Kussepe, United Nations sources and local people said. There, just north of the 35th parallel and the Iraqis' former front line, a mechanised Iraqi battalion of some 50 armoured vehicles and a light, towed artillery battery

Hugh Pope reports from Arbil, the city Saddam Hussein helped the Kurdistan Democratic Party to conquer

of 12 guns were parked in a field by the road. The Iraqis did not seem to be digging in and appeared ready to withdraw, the UN sources said.

The soldiers' main purpose at that point between the front lines of the two rival Iraqi Kurdish factions seemed to be to prevent the retreating Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) from trying to launch a counter-attack to dislodge the new masters of Arbil, the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP).

In the Iraqi Kurdish capital itself, hundreds of KDP fighters still milled around the entrance to the seat of the administration, the governor's

office, or lounged in the shade in front of closed shop shutters. Only a few shops, selling food, were open in the city.

The KDP seemed in complete control of Arbil, and determined to prevent any looking by revenge-minded fighters. At one checkpoint, a convoy of armed guerrillas was barred from entering, leading to angry scenes and the training of heavy machine guns on the guerrillas until they left.

Thanks to the overwhelming force applied to the Saturday assault, backed by Iraqi light artillery and tank fire, the fight had been short and the damage to the city seemed minimal.

Nobody disputed the KDP's figure of fewer than 200 people killed and injured.

A decision to position UN vehicles around the city as soon as the fighting had died down reassured people, encouraged them not to flee, and deterred guerrillas from committing atrocities, the UN sources said.

"In this situation our presence is vital," said the UN chief of security in Iraqi Kurdistan, the former Danish special forces colonel, Poul Dahl. "There is no reason for evacuation."

The mansion used by the PUK leader Jalal Talabani in the city had been wrecked and looted,

with black smoke marks scarring the window lintels. The same scene was repeated at many other houses and bases used by PUK officials in the city.

Such places were often previously used by top Iraqi officials and had been damaged in the much more destructive PUK takeover of the city in December 1994, part of the factional infighting that has split Iraqi Kurdistan in two.

KDP members were busy painting out prominent placards on former PUK buildings, while women walked for miles under the scorching sun, carrying buckets or water tanks to the few places where generators

were pumping water from wells.

Foreign aid sources said that it was likely that the electricity would be restored soon, since the power cut did not appear to be political in origin. It resulted from a break in the power lines between the rival Iraqi Kurdish front lines. A local ceasefire had to be arranged before the lines could be repaired.

The KDP also took down the Iraqi flag that had been flying beside the Kurdish flag above the parliament and the fortified old town that dominates the city — an apparent concession to foreign opinion shocked by their collaboration with President Saddam Hussein's regime.

Local opinion in Arbil was sharply divided over the weekend's events. Small groups that formed to discuss the question agreed that while they still feared President Saddam, they were sick of the situation and would like to see a return to more central government, while keeping their federal Iraqi Kurdistan.

Some feared the continued presence of Iraqi secret police, although their checkpoints, if they existed at all, seem to have been set up only on Saturday and Sunday. Some townspeople even thought that the Iraqi soldiers had behaved very properly. "There is little to eat

and it's very expensive. But we hope that it is the start of stability," 65-year-old Hussain Rahim said, as he stood by blown-out windows and complained that armed men had stolen his car.

Standing underneath the blast-ripped canopy over a shop that sold Turkish Pepsi Cola cooled with ice just brought in from the Iraqi Arab city of Mosul, one man said that he thought the time had come for reunification of the country.

"We embraced America, but we saw nothing from them for the past five years," said long-distance lorry driver Yagoub Othman. "We used to approve of American bombing. But now we don't. We are Iraqis, and proud of it."

Second missile strike wraps up US mission

RUPERT CORNWELL
Washington and
ADEL DARWISH

After its initial sea- and air-launched cruise attack on Tuesday, the United States followed up at dawn yesterday with a second instalment of 17 missiles, delivered from warships and a submarine in the Persian Gulf, in what the Pentagon described as "mopping up" against four of the 14 original targets — all command and control air defence facilities to the south of the Iraqi capital — which may not have been destroyed by the first wave of 27 cruises.

The operation was "successfully completed," the Defense Secretary, William Perry, said as he held long-scheduled talks with his British opposite number, Michael Portillo, representative of the one Western government which has been unequivocal in its support for the air strikes.

Half the Iraqi MiGs stationed south of the 33rd parallel — the new northern boundary of the southern no-fly zone — had already been moved north of that line, he said, while US intelligence had also detected a "general pull back" of Iraqi forces in the Kurdish-populated north, whose incursion had led to this week's American retaliation. But, Mr Perry warned, more than 40,000 men were still in the region, "in a very dangerous position".

France withheld support from President Bill Clinton's raids and indicated it had not agreed in advance to his extension of the no-fly zone from the 32nd parallel. The US, Britain and France have policed the zone since a US-led coalition drove Iraqi forces out of Kuwait in 1991.

Pentagon officials said earlier yesterday that French Mirage jets took part in the first day of patrols of the expanded zone.

But Paris said that the Mirages stayed below the 32nd parallel.

Nevertheless, Mr Perry said he expected France to continue to participate in the allied coalition against Iraq. Asked if the alliance was weakening, Mr Perry said: "I am confident the coalition is not weakening. If anything I think the coalition is strengthening and I fully expect the French to continue participation."

The Russian response has been cooler yet. The Foreign Minister, Yevgeny Primakov, meeting Klaus Kinkel, his German counterpart, in Bonn yesterday, rejected the German view that the US action in

back an Anglo-American attempt to draft a Security Council resolution that would condemn Iraq's offensive against the Kurds and also call for Iran to stop its involvement in northern Iraq; the Egyptians questioned why there was no mention in the draft of the US attack.

Only Kuwait openly supported the US. Saudi Arabia maintained an official silence.

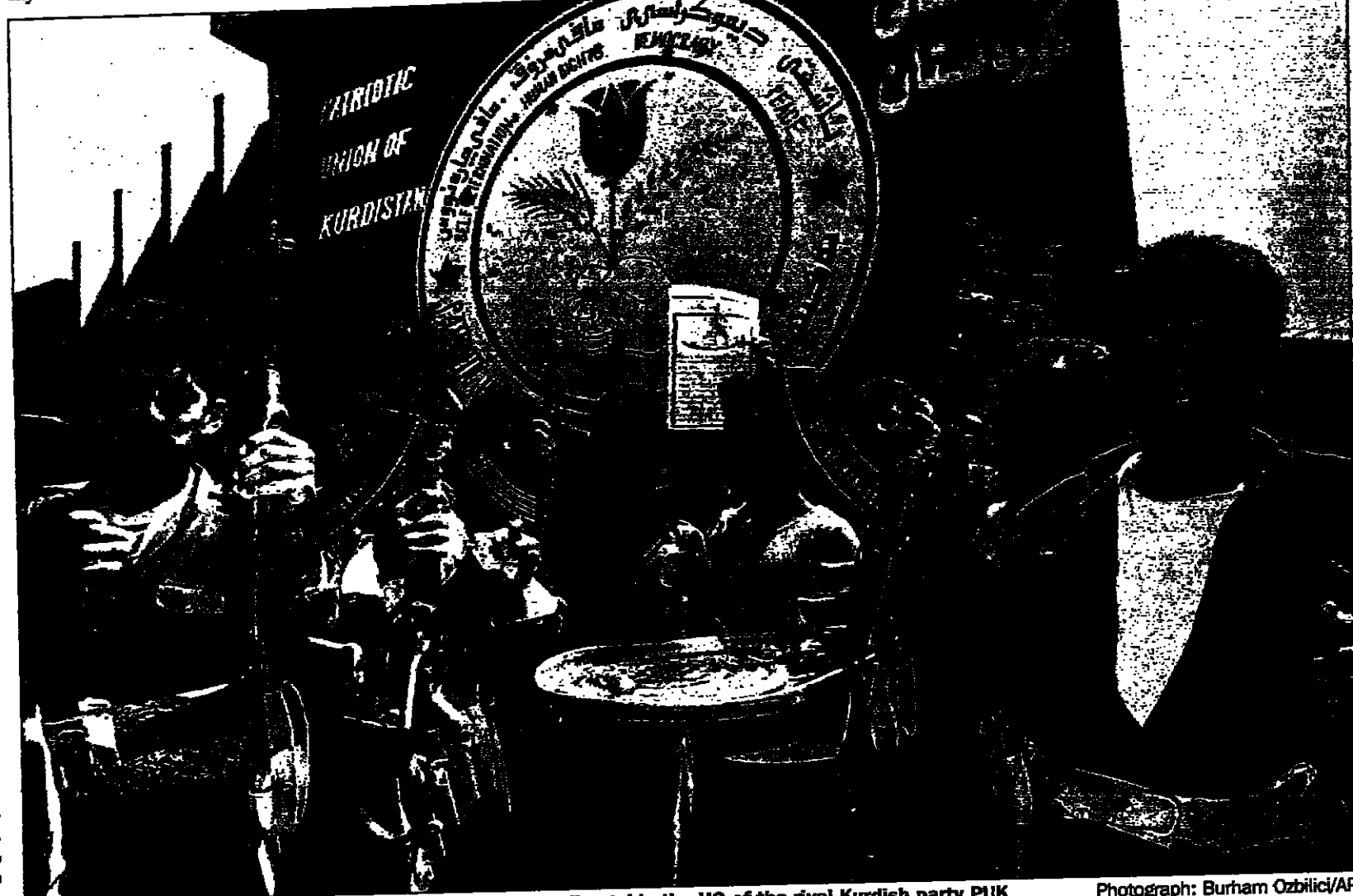
A Western diplomat in Riyadh said: "[The Saudis] may well not want to respond if they can get away without making an official statement."

Despite other reactions, including downright hostility from some moderate Arab governments, Mr Clinton is currently basking in the usual initial public support for a president who uses American military power to handle an international crisis.

According to an ABC television poll yesterday, four out of five Americans approve of the attack, even though they are sceptical it will achieve much in the long run. Three quarters of them believe President Saddam will continue to violate the terms of the Gulf war ceasefire.

The White House also senses that for all the public disapproval, many critics may be secretly delighted at moves whose main effect is to make life safer for the vulnerable oil states of the Gulf.

But Britain is one of the few to say so in public. "We share the American analysis," Mr Portillo said, citing the threat to regional stability posed by President Saddam and his "proven propensity to invade the territory of his neighbours". If this provocation had gone unanswered, the Iraqi dictator would merely be emboldened to go further. Mr Portillo also endorsed yesterday's fresh strikes. Since Britain participated in enforcing the no-fly zone, a threat had been eliminated.



Taste of victory: KDP soldiers celebrate the capture of Arbil outside the HQ of the rival Kurdish party PUK

Photograph: Burhan Ozbilic/AP

Skilful Primakov squares up to West



Primakov: 'Catastrophic consequences'

PHIL REEVES
Moscow

The United States will not have been surprised by Russia's condemnation of its attack on Iraq, but it may well have been startled by the strong language used by Yevgeny Primakov, Moscow's Foreign Minister. The assaults were "a very dangerous situation" which could have "catastrophic consequences", he said. They could even lead to "anarchy" on the world scene.

This does not sound like the Mr Primakov that the Western world has come to know since he left his office as Moscow's chief spy master and took over from Andrei Kozirev. In nearly eight months in office, he has established a reputation for coolness and restraint. Now, clearly, the gloves are off.

The Iraqi question is one that Mr Primakov can claim to know well, and with justification. He has been involved with the Middle East for 30 years, as a journalist, an academic, a spy master, and a diplomat. Such is his knowledge of the territory — he speaks Arabic — that Mikhail Gorbachev dispatched him to Iraq before the Gulf war in an effort to mediate with Saddam Hussein. Russia has big strategic interests at stake in Iraq — including hopes for oil and gas deals — but Mr Primakov also has a personal involvement.

The initial reaction of the West when this enigmatic man took over the Foreign Ministry veered between disappointment and dismay. His curriculum vitae was that of a man who had manoeuvred cleverly to the top through all the right jobs. He

owed his rise to his skill at adjusting to the prevailing political winds, quietly occupying the centre ground under Brezhnev, becoming more liberal under Mr Gorbachev, and more conservative under Boris Yeltsin.

Such is his political flexibility that it was believed he would have remained in office had the Communist, Gennady Zyuganov, beaten Mr Yeltsin in July's election. But Mr Primakov's four years in command of the foreign intelligence apparatus fuelled Western suspicions that he would turn out to be more hostile than his predecessor.

Detecting a nationalist mood in the country as he limbered up for an election campaign, Mr Yeltsin had sacked Mr Kozirev because many Russians considered him to be too accommodating to the West. Mr

Primakov was careful to ensure that the public noticed the change of guard. He talked of Russia restoring its "great power" status — a buzzword with the nationalists. And he spoke of the Arab world occupying a "considerable place" on Russia's foreign policy map.

Since then the rumblings of disapproval in the West have died down. There have been no dramatic foreign policy lurches, although tensions remain on several fronts — notably, Nato expansion into eastern Europe.

Yesterday Mr Primakov insisted Moscow's opposition was unchanged but committed himself to formalising Russia's relationship with Nato. This was the stance of a man with whom the West thinks it can work. His views of the US interference with Iraq are a different matter.

Strikes fail US policy aims

ROBERT FISK
Middle East Correspondent

Behind this week's missile bombardments of Iraq lies one of the oddest of all US policies in the Middle East: "dual containment". Proposed by the former head of the Middle East desk at the United States National Security Council, Martin Indyk, the aim was to curb the power of both Iraq and Iran.

Israel had long advanced the same thesis. Iraq and Iran — so Mr Indyk told his masters — were the opponents of "peace" in the region; their influence must be countered by American economic, political and military pressure. And US diplomats assiduously took this approach with the Gulf states: the greatest danger to their stability, they told the kings and emirs, came from Baghdad and Tehran.

But this week's missile assaults on Iraq seem to make America's stated Middle East policy a little more difficult to understand. Bombing the Iraqis who support the Kurds opposed to Iran — the Kurdistan Democratic Party which invited Saddam Hussein's troops into Arbil — gives kudos to Jalal Talabani, whose alliance with Iran seems to grow stronger by the hour.

Iran has deplored the US air strikes, but its Kurdish allies have been the principal beneficiaries of this week's American adventure. Many a glass of warm Pepsi must therefore

have been raised in Tehran in support of President Bill Clinton's latest adventure. Perhaps even to Martin Indyk. Or did the Americans not realise they were involving themselves in the Kurdish civil war?

Mr Indyk is perhaps the most interesting figure in this whole process. He is now US ambassador to Israel but formally worked for Aipac — the American Israeli Public Affairs Committee — which lies at the heart of the Jewish lobby in the US. A committed Zionist, Mr Indyk co-founded the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, an Aipac satellite, and has always allied himself with the right-wing Israeli Likud party which won the elections last May. This, however, did not stop Mr Clinton appointing him ambassador to Israel where his advice to Yasser Arafat — after the March suicide bombings that slaughtered dozens of Israelis — was "to use more stick and less carrot".

The American "stick" is being used with ever greater frequency against Iraq and Iran: last year, Mr Clinton told an audience at a New York Jewish meeting that he would impose economic sanctions against Iran. Now the sword is pointing at Iraq. The Israelis are happy — providing, of course, Saddam Hussein does not fire missiles at them. And Mr Indyk must be satisfied. What chance, the Iranians must be wondering, that the "stick" is next used against them?

80% UK POPULATION COVERAGE BY THE END OF '96

One 2 One is the latest digital network covering London, the South East, West Midlands and now the South Coast and Manchester. For more details of coverage in your area please call the One 2 One coverage line on 0956 956956.

ONE 2 ONE BENEFITS INCLUDE:

- CALLS CHARGED BY THE SECOND
- FREE UNLIMITED LOCAL WEEKEND CALLS
- TIERED BILLING INCLUDED
- OFF-PEAK STARTS AT 5PM - AN HOUR EARLIER THAN OTHER NETWORKS
- FREE NATIONAL ANSWERING SERVICE
- COMET - WINNER OF MOBILE NEWS AWARD - BEST MULTIMEDIA RETAILER

THE COMET PRICE PROMISE: If you buy any product from Comet, then within 14 days find the same offer on sale locally at a lower price, we'll happily refund the difference. PLUS 10% OF THAT DIFFERENCE.

ONE 2 ONE MOBILES NOW FROM ONLY £9.99

PLUS FREE UNLIMITED WEEKEND CALLS

MOTOROLA m301

- 70 minutes talktime • 12 hours standby time
- 99 memories • Backlit display and keypad
- Desktop charger

normally £39.99

LOWEST PRICE EVER £9.99 SAVE £30

ONE 2 ONE MERCURY

MOTOROLA FLARE

- 60 minutes talktime
- 12 hours standby time
- 99 memories
- Rapid charger

In-store £119.99

CHEQUEBACK £49.99 SAVE £70

ERICSSON PH337

- 120 minutes talktime
- 17 hours standby time
- 99 memories
- Voice mail for storing or receiving messages
- Rapid charger

In-store £169.99

CHEQUEBACK £99.99 SAVE £70

THE COMET PRICE INDEX UPDATED DAILY ON Teletext Ch.4 P.425

COMET

MOST STORES OPEN SUNDAY AND UNTIL 8PM WEEKDAYS

RING FREE ON 0500 425 425 FOR DETAILS OF YOUR NEAREST STORE

هاتوا من الاصل

Peace process: No breakthrough on Hebron, but talks viewed as a sign that Israeli-Palestinian relations are on the mend

Netanyahu and Arafat stage a chilly summit

JOHN LICHFIELD

Binyamin Netanyahu and Yasser Arafat shook hands and spoke for an hour yesterday – an event of great symbolic importance – but their first meeting failed to clear away the most pressing obstacles to resumption of the Middle East peace process.

After the encounter, at the Erez Gaza border crossing, the Israeli Prime Minister refused to give a date for the much-postponed withdrawal of most Israeli troops from the West Bank city of Hebron. However, the mere fact of the meeting suggests Israeli-Palestinian relations, strained to breaking-point since Mr Netanyahu was elected in May, may be healing rapidly.

The Israeli Prime Minister, who once swore never to meet "that man" Arafat, had two conversations with the Palestinian President in one day. In the first, by telephone, Mr Arafat apologised to the Israeli leader for

insults heaped on him in the Palestinian press. A columnist in *Al-Ayyam* newspaper said on Tuesday that Mr Netanyahu was "more Nazi than Hitler".

Mr Netanyahu had said he would meet Mr Arafat only when he had something firm to announce or to discuss an urgent security problem. But yesterday's meeting involved neither. Afterwards, at a joint press conference, Mr Netanyahu said he would respect accords signed by the previous Labour government and was ready to negotiate a final peace agreement. Mr Arafat said the meeting would lead to a full-scale resumption of the peace process.

There was no public sign of warmth between the two men, who failed to look at each other. None the less, Israeli television repeatedly showed their handshake, the first formal recognition of Mr Arafat as a partner in peace by a Prime Minister from the Likud party.

The two sides are said to be

close to agreeing on measures including redeployment in Hebron. Mr Netanyahu refused to be drawn, saying this and other issues would be discussed in an Israeli-Palestinian steering committee. Mr Arafat said: "I have nothing to add, but to state that we will continue to negotiate and to co-ordinate in all efforts, by all means."

The handover of Hebron and removal of Israeli troops from most of the city is the most contentious immediate issue. Mr Netanyahu's coalition of right-wing and religious parties has said it wants to renegotiate the terms Labour agreed. Palestinian officials said they were willing only to discuss implementation of the existing deal.

Hardline members of the Israeli coalition said the meeting betrayed Likud policy, but Mr Netanyahu insisted it was in line with his campaign pledges to replace the previous Palestinian negotiations with a tougher brand of "peace with security". Labour politicians and many Israeli civil servants will nevertheless take yesterday's summit as proof of what they had long predicted: that Mr Netanyahu would have to, in the short term, return to something like the Oslo peace process, because there was no other viable course.

Israeli officials said Mr Netanyahu had come to accept that Israel's security depends on cooperation with the Palestinian Authority (and that Mr Arafat has done a good – maybe too draconian – security job). Some form of Hebron deal, linked to wider access to Israel for Palestinian workers, may be possible in the near future.

The real problems will come in the medium or longer term, when Mr Netanyahu faces the core issues still undecided, such as the final status of the Palestinian authority, the future of Jerusalem and the final division of the West Bank between Palestinian areas and Israeli settlements.



Gripping stuff: Binyamin Netanyahu (left) and Yasser Arafat going through the motions at yesterday's icy border meeting Photograph: Reuters

Siege threat in Burundi as rebels target capital

DAVID ORR
Nairobi

Residents of the Burundian capital, Bujumbura, are bracing themselves for further attacks following the first outbreak of fighting in the city since last year.

Although the Tutsi-dominated army insists it has pushed back the Hutu rebels who looted mortar rounds at the university on Tuesday, many believe the city could soon become besieged in the manner of Sarajevo or Kabul.

Yesterday, a United States aircraft landed at the airport to pick up all "non-essential" American citizens remaining in the capital. It was rumoured that the ousted Hutu president, Sylvestre Ntibunganya,

who sought US diplomatic protection shortly before a military coup at the end of July, would be evacuated on the plane.

Violence has been escalating rapidly in the tiny central African nation since the army reinstated Pierre Buyoya, an ethnic Tutsi, as president six weeks ago today. The main rebel group, the National Council for the Defence of Democracy (CNDD), already claims to be in control of the northern Kayanza region, the scene of heavy fighting in recent days.

The rebels' growing confidence has been demonstrated by their attack on a military post in the northern commune of Gashamba last Tuesday, where they had restricted operations to raids on Tutsi settlements and

ambushes on National Route 1, Burundi's main road which runs through Kayanza.

Tutsis make up about 15 per cent of Burundi's 6 million inhabitants and Hutus 85 per cent. The CNDD, through its military wing, Forces for the Defence of Democracy (FDD), is fighting to overthrow the Buyoya regime which suspended parliament and all political parties on assuming power. Despite this week's attack, the rebel group has denied that it intends to take the capital.

"The rebels are putting a lot

of pressure on Bujumbura", one Western diplomat told *The Independent*. "There is no doubt they're better organised than they were, and that they can hurt the army if they want to. They're waging real war now".

In an effort to defuse the situation, Mr Buyoya has offered to talk to all armed groups opposing him if they guarantee to stop killing civilians. Previously, he had demanded that they lay down arms before any negotiations could begin. "If their purpose is to seize power," said the diplomat, "the rebels will

continue to fight. If what they want is power-sharing, then they are nearly in a position to have their demands respected".

Mr Buyoya has also promised to restore the national assembly this month and to reinstate political parties within three months. These are two of the conditions regional leaders say would have to be met for them to withdraw sanctions imposed on Burundi after the coup.

"It's difficult to tell what the reaction of neighbouring countries will be," said another Western diplomat. "Mr Buyoya's promises are a step in the right direction but they can hardly be seen as a sufficient answer".

Fuel is now in short supply in Bujumbura as the economic blockade continues to strangle

the country. Exports have been stalled by the embargo and many companies have had to lay off workers. Hutu farmers coming into the now-Tutsi town of Bujumbura to sell their produce are often turned back by the rebels. According to one report, peasants have had hands cut off for taking foodstuffs to market.

"There's been no electricity day or night in Bujumbura," said one aid worker in the capital. "A lack of transport has led to a shortage of basic medicines in many areas of the countryside. Food prices have also gone up, in some cases doubling".

Burundi's junta stands accused of massacring thousands of Hutu civilians since coming to power on 25 July. Despite his naming of a Hutu as prime minister and his sacking of three controversial army officers, Mr Buyoya has failed to win over significant numbers of Hutus.

Indeed, the largest political party, Frodebu, was yesterday reported to have thrown its support behind the rebels. A spokesman said the party was now appealing to all Hutus to rally behind the CNDD. Such a development would mark a significant deviation in the will of the Hutu community to resolve the conflict peacefully.

Burundi has been torn apart by ethnic strife since its first freely elected president, Melchior Ndadaye, a Hutu, was assassinated in 1993. Amnesty International estimates that more than 150,000 people have lost their lives since then.

There is no doubt they can hurt the army. They're waging real war now

2 for 1 Comedy Tapes Offer

THE INDEPENDENT

If laughter really is the best medicine, then *The Independent* and the *Independent* on Sunday are about to improve your health dramatically.

In conjunction with Laughing Stock, we are giving you the chance to buy up to 20 audio comedy cassettes on a 'two for the price of one' basis. Two double cassettes cost £8.99, two single cassettes £6.99, or choose one of each for just £7.99. All prices include postage and packing.

Our list includes some of the country's top comedians from Paul Merton, Eddie Izzard and Jo Brand, to timeless classics such as Tony Hancock and Peter Cook. So next time you're sitting in rush hour traffic, say goodbye to road rage and have a good laugh instead.

How to Apply
To obtain your two audio comedy cassettes for the price of one, start by collecting three differently numbered tokens from the seven we are publishing in *The Independent* and the *Independent* on Sunday. Today we are printing Token 6. Our final token, Token 7, plus the final order form will be printed in tomorrow's *Independent*.

Send your tokens, together with a completed order form and cheque, to the address below. With your three tokens you can order as many cassettes as you wish in multiples of two. Photocopies of tokens and order forms are not acceptable.

When ordering, please allow 28 days for delivery from the date of your order. No responsibility will be accepted for delays caused by industrial action within the postal service. Orders must be received by 30 September 1996. Cassettes are subject to availability. Offer available to readers in the UK and Republic of Ireland only. If you have any queries concerning receipt of your order, please call our helpline on 0181 699 9922. Please make cheques payable to 'Independent Comedy Offer' and send your order to: Independent Comedy Offer, P.O. Box 3763, London SE23 2DQ.

Double Cassettes - 2 for £8.99
Eddie Izzard
'Unrepentable'
Paul Merton
'My Struggle' (HyperCollins)
Jo Brand
'Double Helix'
Korvan Atkinson
'Live'
The Reduced Shakespeare Company
'The Best of the Best'
Red Dwarf
'Infinitely Welcomes Careful Drivers'
Ben Elton
'Live'
Barry Cryer
'That Reminds Me'
Gordon Brittas
'Sharing the Dream'
Various Inc. Lily Tomlin, Stephen Fry
'Just for Laughs'
Frankie Howard
'Frankie's out'
Amnesty International
'The Best of the Best'
Michael Bentine
'The Original Groucho'
Peter Cook
'Anthology 1961 - 1989'
Shirley Valentine
read by Willy Russell

Single Cassettes - 2 for £6.99
Sean Hughes
'Sean's Tape'
Kory Bremner
'Hudson Hasty Four'
Greg Proops
'Live'
Tony Hancock
'The Wood Grouse and the Radio Star'
John Bird and John Fortune
'Long John'

**2 for 1
Comedy Tapes Offer**

Token 6

THE INDEPENDENT

This is Sam.

Sam's just got £40 by opening a Midland student account
(which she'll definitely spend on a pair of Converse® trainers).

She's also got a BT Chargecard with £10 worth of free calls
(which she might use to call her boyfriend Tony in Leeds – then again she might not).

She could have called
0800 180 180.

or applied for us online
at her local Midland.

or posted her coupon.

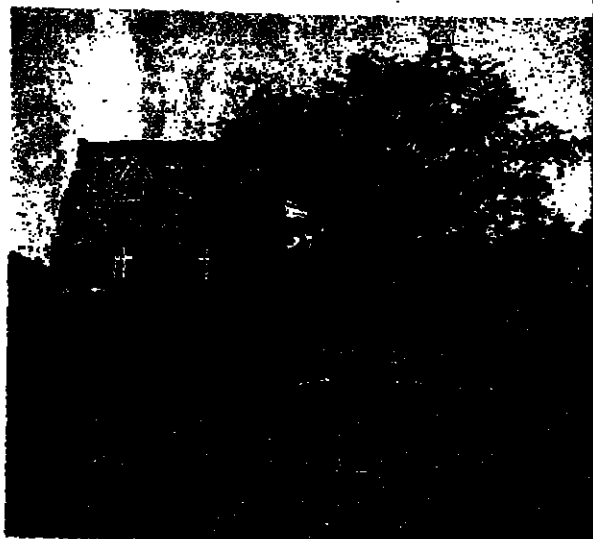
MIDLAND
The Listening Bank

Member HSBC Group

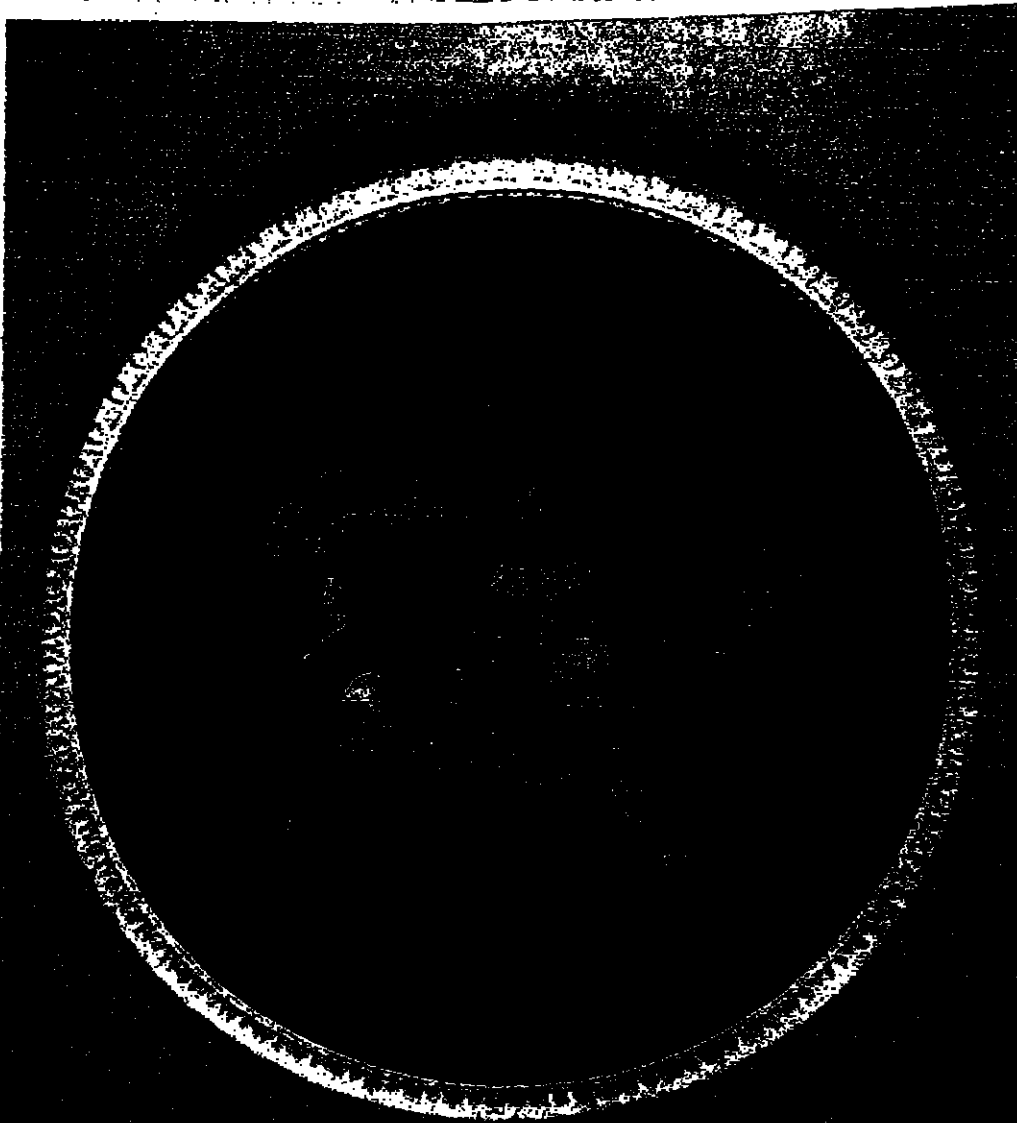
For a copy of the Midland Student brochure, pass the coupon to Midland Bank plc, Dept. 40603, P.O. Box 757, FREEPOST, Harlow, Essex CM18 7BQ.

Mr/Ms/Ms/other:
Full Name _____
Address _____
Town _____ County _____
Postcode _____ Telephone _____

AND 6/9



Britain's largest dovecote, built in 1746.
Johnstounburn House, Humber nr. Edinburgh.



Circular ceiling fresco painted in
1901 by Thomas Mitchell.
Cannizzaro House, Wimbledon.

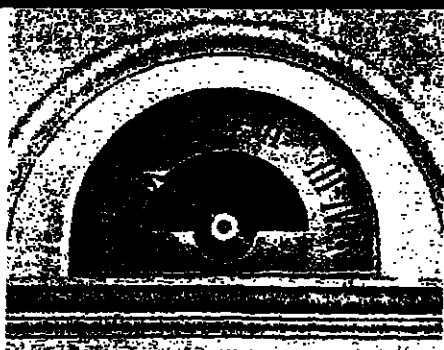


18th century
spoon backed chair.
Shelleys, Lewes.

THERE'S SOMETHING
DIFFERENT
ABOUT ALL OUR HOTELS.
EVERYTHING.



Art Deco
Olympian figurine.
The Mount Royal, London.



Edwardian brass lift level indicator.
Whites, London.



Original 1877 stained glass
window depicting Richard III
arriving in Exeter.
The Rougemont, Exeter.



Original 1796 leaded
Gothic window.
New Hall, Sutton Coldfield.

We understand that hotel guests, especially perennial
travellers, rather like the place they're staying in to have a
character of its own. So when you step into one of our hotels, that
vaguely disturbing notion of déjà vu one associates with chain
hotels, is pleasingly absent. In 100 locations across the country.
For more information and reservations phone 0800 18 17 16.



THISTLE HOTELS

This advertisement has been tested by, and is the sole responsibility of, Thistle Hotels PLC and approved by Baring Brothers International Limited ("Baring") and Merrill Lynch International ("Merrill Lynch"), which are regulated by the SFA, solely for the purposes of section 57 of the Financial Services Act 1986. Baring and Merrill Lynch are acting exclusively for Thistle Hotels PLC and will not be responsible to anyone else for providing the protection afforded to their customers nor for providing advice in relation to its proposed share offer. The value of shares can go down as well as up. Foreign working advice should consult a professional adviser. Substitution: 588.

هنا من الأصل

Hungary's Jews look proudly at a gilt-edged future

Budapest — As a boy, Gusztav Zoltai kept a careful eye on what was going on above him whenever he attended services in Budapest's vast central synagogue. Hit by 27 bombs during the war, the building was in a perilous state and bits of loose plaster and slates were prone to come crashing down, albeit into an improvised safety netting.

"It was immensely sad to see such a magnificent building in such a terrible condition," recalled Mr Zoltai, one of some 80,000 Hungarian Jews who survived the Holocaust. "Here was an important part of not only Hungarian, but world heritage and it was crumbling before our very eyes."

This afternoon, Mr Zoltai, head of the Federation of Jewish Communities in Hungary, will join thousands of people expected to pack the synagogue — the largest in Europe — to mark its official re-opening after five years of renovation.

This time when he looks above him he will marvel at the painstakingly restored ceiling panels. When he looks to the

Adrian Bridge reports on the \$9m restoration of Budapest's synagogue

front, he will be dazzled by the gold leaf on the 26th high facade of the Ark of the Covenant in which will be placed the synagogue's original Torah scrolls. "This building symbolises the survival and continuity of the Jewish people," said Mr Zoltai, whose period of office has coincided with the fall of communism and a revival of Jewish culture. "It symbolises that Hitler came, but the Jewish people cannot be destroyed."

As a mark of the significance attached to the synagogue, both within and beyond Hungary, the ceremony will be attended by former Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir and his wife, the Hungarian-born US Congressman Tom Lantos and Arpad Goncez, the Hungarian President. In addition to the 5,000 seated participants, the occasion could attract a further 5,000 on-lookers. "This may be a time of economic hardship in Hungary, but the restoration of this build-

ing sends out a positive signal of renewal," said Mr Zoltai. "It should enrich everyone's lives."

Originally opened in 1859, the synagogue was the focal point of Hungary's thriving pre-war Jewish community. As a result of its size — 53 metres long by 26m wide and 26m high — it could hardly be missed.

During the war, the synagogue served as a place of refuge for Jews trying to escape forced labour and, later, concentration camps. When the Budapest ghetto was set up in late 1944, the building ran along one of its boundaries. After the war, although damaged, it continued to be used by the Jewish community, but under the communists was left to rot.

Of Hungary's pre-war Jewish population of 800,000, only 80,000 survived the war, some 20 per cent of these as a direct result of Raoul Wallenberg, the Swedish diplomat who established a number of safe houses for Jews in Budapest and

who disappeared mysteriously after the conflict.

Despite such losses, Hungary still boasted a relatively large Jewish community in comparison to those left elsewhere in central and eastern Europe. But while not persecuted for un-

der Hungary's post-war communist rulers, Jews preferred to keep a low profile.

The decision to restore the Dohany Street synagogue was taken two years after the fall of communism in 1989 when the Hungarian government agreed

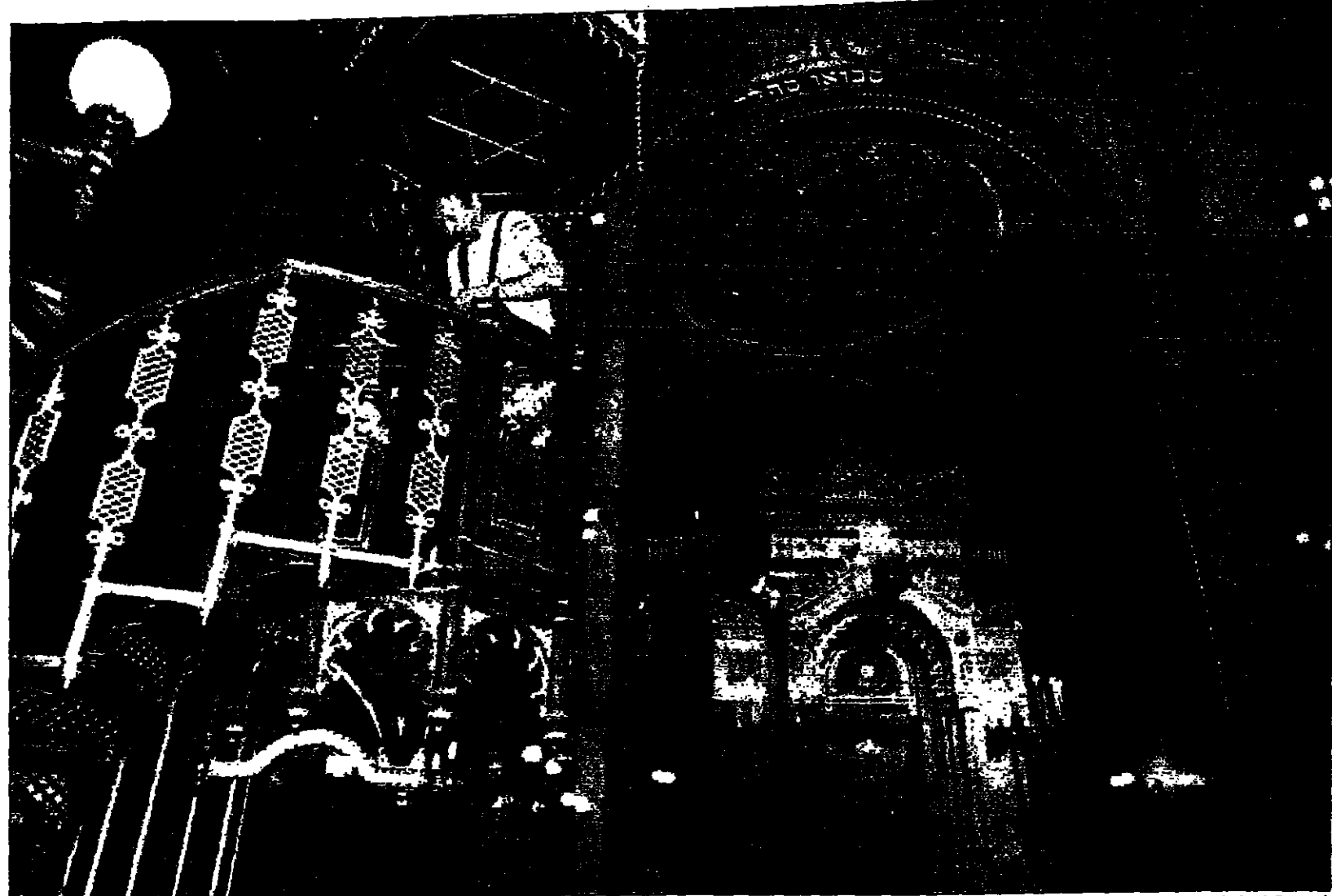
to pay 80 per cent of the estimated 1.35 billion forint (\$9m) cost, with the remainder coming from the Hungarian Jewish community and international Jewish organisations.

The project has coincided with a steady revival of the Jew-

ish community in Hungary. With it, though, has come a return of more overt signs of anti-Semitism.

"To some extent anti-Semitism was suppressed during the communist era and its expression now can be seen as a nat-

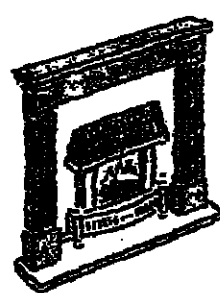
ural part of the transition to democracy," said Rabbi Robert Fröhlich. "But it has not deterred our community. On the contrary, younger Jews are once again interested in exploring their Jewishness and in coming back to the fold."



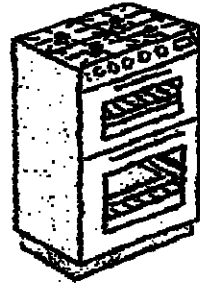
Good as new: Workers put the finishing touches to restoration work at Europe's largest synagogue, in Budapest. Photograph: Laszlo Balogh/Reuters



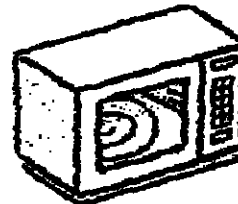
Ever wished you'd bought your fire from the Energy Centre?



**UP TO £100
TRADE-IN**
ON SELECTED
FIRES



**UP TO £150
TRADE-IN**
ON SELECTED
COOKERS



**UP TO
£30 OFF**
SELECTED MICROWAVES

Lots of special offers on cookers, fires, and microwaves. So come and see us now.

THE RIGHT ADVICE • THE RIGHT PRICE • THE RIGHT CHOICE

ALL OFFERS END 9 OCTOBER 1996. ELECTRICAL PRODUCTS ARE NOT AVAILABLE IN OUR MERRY HILL SHOP. ALL PRODUCTS SUBJECT TO AVAILABILITY. CREDIT TERMS AND BUY NOW AND PAY LATER ARE AVAILABLE SUBJECT TO STATUS WHEN YOU PAY 5% DEPOSIT AND SIGN A CREDIT AGREEMENT WITH PAYMENTS TO BE MADE BY DIRECT DEBIT. WORSTER QUOTATIONS ARE AVAILABLE ON REQUEST FROM BRITISH GAS ENERGY CENTRES. FREEPOST C2466, STRATFORD-UPON-AVON, CV37 9BL. TYPICAL CREDIT EXAMPLE: BUY NOW PAY MAY 1997 NEW WORLD MIX GAS COOKER, CASH PRICE £229.99 (AFTER 27% TRADE-IN, INCLUDING DELIVERY), DEPOSIT £26.50 AND 36 MONTHLY PAYMENTS OF £20.32, COMMENCING 31ST MAY 1997. TOTAL AMOUNT PAYABLE £748.05. APR 29.5%. *FREE DELIVERY IS AVAILABLE WITHIN BRITAIN AND IRELAND, EXCLUDING CASH AND CARRY ITEMS. THE CLAIM FOR A REFUND OR EXCHANGE MUST BE MADE WITHIN 5 DAYS AFTER THE 14 DAY TRIAL. THE TRIAL STARTS FROM THE DAY OF DELIVERY. BRITISH GAS ENERGY CENTRES WILL COLLECT THE PRODUCT AT NO CHARGE BUT WILL NEITHER PAY FOR NOR ARRANGE DISCONNECTION. THE PRODUCT MUST BE RETURNED UNHARMED AND COMPLETE TO QUALIFY. FULL CONDITIONS AVAILABLE IN STORE. **INSTALLATION IS AVAILABLE FOR AN EXTRA CHARGE.

**Energy
CENTRE**

240 stores nationwide

Experienced and knowledgeable staff

Expert advice

Wide choice from top brands

Very competitive prices

Lots of ways to pay††

Specialists in gas and electric cooking and heating

Free delivery nationwide*

14-day exchange or money back guarantee† on Value Plus products

Complete installation service**

Comprehensive after sales service

Professional advice on central heating

Backed by British Gas

For your nearest Energy Centre call free 0800 850 900.

SIGNIFICANT SHORTS

Japanese doomsday cult leader Shoko Asahara, whose trial for the poison gas attack on the Tokyo subway last year resumes tomorrow, is to be confronted by his followers in court. Mr Asahara is accused of ordering followers to release the deadly nerve gas sarin on rush-hour subway trains in March 1995. The attack killed 11 people and made 5,500 ill. The Aum Shinri Kyo sect's doctor, Ikuro Hayashi, and Mr Asahara's lieutenant Yoshihiro Inoue, both accused of taking part in the subway attack, will testify on the role Mr Asahara played in the gassing. *Reuters - Tokyo*

Russia will return Liechtenstein's royal family archives seized in the Second World War — in exchange for historical documents on the Bolsheviks' execution of Czar Nicholas II, officials said. *AP - Moscow*

A 16-day strike by Zimbabwe's government workers appeared over yesterday, with civil servants returning to their jobs but threatening to walk out again if their demands were ignored.

According to the state news agency, the strike cost the government at least 1 billion Zimbabwe dollars (\$66m) in uncollected revenue. The government agreed to back down from its decision to fire workers during the strike and earlier raised its pay offer from 9 to 29 per cent. *AP - Harare*

France plans a crackdown on the sexual abuse of children, Justice Minister Jacques Toubon said. A package of measures curbing sex tourism, pornographic material and messages on the Internet involving children will be announced on 20 November. *Reuters - Paris*

Hundreds of Vietnamese prostitutes, drug addicts, beggars and petty criminals were detained in an overnight blitz on "social evils" in Ho Chi Minh City last week, an official in the city said.

"Over 1,900 were rounded up. This is the biggest campaign in more than 20 years," said the official at the anti-social evils department said. *Reuters - Hanoi*

South Pacific islands leaders decided to readmit France to their annual discussions despite resentment about past French nuclear testing in the region. France was dropped as a dialogue partner by the 16-nation South Pacific Forum last year after it went ahead with a six-site series in French Polynesia. *AP - Majuro, Marshall Islands*

Russia expelled two Swedes, one of them a senior diplomat, for alleged spying, the Swedish news agency TT reported. Swedish authorities refused early comment on the affair. *Reuters - Stockholm*

A species of pheasant thought to have become extinct has been rediscovered in central Vietnam, the World Wide Fund for Nature said. WWF country representative David Hulst said villagers in the forests of Bach Ma National Park caught a male and a female Edwards's pheasant last week. The last known capture of a live Edwards's was in 1928. *Reuters - Hanoi*

Hotel Breaks 2 nights for the price of 1



Starting this Saturday, enjoy two nights for the price of one with The Independent.

THE INDEPENDENT

Fickle friends at Labour's cocktail party

Look at the company Labour is keeping these days. Or rather, look at the companies. Hundreds of them sent representatives to Labour's love-in with business yesterday. Furthermore, we hear rumours that several high-profile companies are planning to abandon their traditional allegiance to the Conservatives to woo Mr Blair instead.

It has been a long march from the banner-led rallies to the boardroom. Gallons of gastric juices have been spilt on white wine and prawn cocktails along the way. At last business is willing, if not yet entirely convinced.

But Mr Blair should beware the temptation to trim his policies any further to suit some notional business palate. Labour's economic and industrial policies are broadly sensible and good for business. If industrial and financial leaders are still hostile to new Labour, it is because they are too cautious, or too prejudiced, or because they fear that old Labour is waiting in the wings. It would be a mistake for Labour to compromise on the few remaining policies that the business community actively dislikes (such as the minimum wage) just to try and boost business support further.

Official party policy, and the warm words emanating from Tony Blair and Gordon Brown, should be encouraging for business. Governments serve the private sector best if they promote steady growth and avoid the chaotic boom-bust

cycles that destroy so many good companies. Gordon Brown's statements about inflation targets, and the borrowing rules he would follow, are as promising as anyone could expect from an opposition party, and are close to the Government's official position too.

Where Labour has attempted to differentiate itself - on education and skills - business should have even more to hope for. As more and more economic activity depends on human capital rather than physical capital, businesses will benefit from any improvements in the skill base of the nation.

In Europe too, the absence of a beligerent Euro-sceptic tone (so far) within the Labour Party should be reassuring for exporters. In contrast, the Conservative right's antagonism to Europe could jeopardise British companies' ability to compete in a single European market. Even on red tape, that obsession of small businesses, Labour is making the right noises about avoiding new regulations, and refusing to turn back the clock on trade union legislation.

In spite of all this sensible stuff, many senior industrialists and financiers remain unconvinced. They may be less willing to criticise Labour openly these days, they may even want to shake hands with Mr Blair, or go to lunch with Mr Brown, to press their particular cause. Tony Blair is attracting the pals of power. But these are fickle friends. Behind the lunches and the lobbying



ONE CANADA SQUARE, CANARY WHARF, LONDON E14 6DL
TELEPHONE 0171-293 2000 / 0171-345 2000 FAX 0171-293 2435 / 0171-345 2435

often lies a resolute Conservative supporter. Few senior business leaders are yet prepared to mark their cross beside the Labour candidate next year. Even at yesterday's much-heralded conference, big business leaders were not much in evidence; they had sent along their public relations people instead.

Faced with such persistent scepticism, new Labour may feel tempted to adapt a few other policies too, just to win a bit more private-sector support. That troublesome minimum wage, for example: just think what a fuss small firms and retailers make about it - it could be toned down a little further, or

delayed a little longer. Mr Blair should resist such pressures. A minimum wage, set at a sensible level, is essential protection for the poorest of workers and for the taxpayer's pocket. Moreover, many companies are gradually coming round both to the minimum wage and to the supposedly reviled Social Chapter.

Many of the business leaders who still resist Mr Blair's charming smile will never be persuaded by an opposition Labour Party. Perhaps they are too deeply prejudiced to associate red roses with anything other than thorns. Or perhaps they are just cautious and will wait

to be convinced by Labour in government. Many of our most senior industrialists are driven by self-interest, too; they include the so-called "fat cats", whom Labour plans to deprive of their executive share options. Personal financial circumstances, and the natural distaste that highly paid people have for the risk of higher taxes, may have more to do with their attitude to Labour than any of the party's broad economic policy.

But Mr Blair has one weak point that business leaders are right to worry about: the rest of his party. Most Labour MPs are a lot less anti-business than they were a decade ago - but they cannot yet be described as pro-business. Emerging from a tradition that viewed profit as the proceeds of exploitation, and competition as something nasty and distasteful, many still instinctively shy away from business and the market.

Even the business men and women who do not fear a Labour landslide in case it encourages Mr Blair to accommodate his more left-wing colleagues. They are wrong: actually a landslide would give Blair the power to pursue his own agenda. But their anxiety is powerfully felt.

The Labour leader has a real and important task to persuade the rest of his party to embrace the pro-business attitude that he has genuinely adopted. Beyond that, he should be confident in his position, not daunted by the conservatism of the financial and industrial establishment. In fact, he should even be prepared to take them on, in the name of good business and a prosperous economy, by developing the stakeholding ideas he raised last January. If new Labour can build a corporate strategy that discourages short-termism, while avoiding red tape and corporatism, it will have found a programme that is good for business and good for Britain, whether or not it receives the assent of a few thousand bosses.

Rattle in the high street

The Last Night of the 1995 Proms saw the mixed reception of Harrison Birtwhistle's *Panic*. You could have substituted Webern or Schoenberg and got pretty much the same response - musical modernism is unpopular. So Sir Simon Rattle has set himself a formidable challenge by presenting a new television series intended to redeem 20th-century orchestral music. He and his City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, as he proved again this week at the Royal Albert Hall, can make the most strenuous music compelling. If it takes a star to sell Stockhausen to the high street, he's the man.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Why women have less time to spare

Sir: In her article about the New Man ("Where do all the New Men go?", 2 September) and in particular in quoting our data on the respective time budgets of full-time-working men and women, Polly Toynbee raises some profoundly important points, a couple of which deserve amplification.

First, there are indeed these very large differences in the discretionary free time available to working men and women, but why exactly? One hypothesis is that it reflects the intransigence of men. But we know from other work that male interest in many traditional female domains - for example in food and in the upbringing of their children - is increasing.

The reconciliation could be that there is "interest" without action, and that whilst it is no longer beneath male dignity to demand a particular brand of grocery product or to express a point of view on the education of their children, it is still beyond their capacities to do the shopping, attend the meetings with teachers or to supervise the homework.

Another possibility is alluded to by Polly Toynbee, namely that the wife/mother/worker is reluctant to cede control over a power base and is thus preventing the participation by eager, willing and able males in the domestic sphere.

Neither in our consulting work nor in our pure research have we had occasion to discover which of these hypotheses is closest to the truth. For policy purposes it is important that we should know.

A final point not really discussed by Polly Toynbee is the consequences of the double or triple loading of responsibilities on females. First, and most obviously, the rise in stress-related diseases among women indicates that the load is taking its toll.

Second, and less widely rehearsed, the people to whom the working mother does seem prepared to turn to relieve at least some of the pressure are the child's grandparents. Three-generation activities are increasing. We also know from our consulting work that the phenomenon of the "granny school pick-up" is developing apace.

The consequence is that there is a significant number of the current generation of children subject to extended family influence - just at the time when our sociology was telling us that such a phenomenon was a thing of the past.

BOB TYRRELL
Chairman
The Henley Centre
London EC4

Gas company is bubbling well

Sir: I refer to your article on Eastern Natural Gas ("Eastern set to lose millions in dash for gas", 2 September). In a fiercely competitive market Eastern Natural Gas (ENG) has achieved very significant growth, with turnover rising from £1m in 1992 to in excess of £200m by the end of September 1996. Since its inception five years ago, ENG has traded profitably. In 1996, we will also trade over a billion terms of gas.

We are now the largest independent gas supplier in the country and continue to seek new customers in every sector. We are



"Question: a man has two dogs, I buy one dog, how many dogs does the man have?"

signing up 250 new customers a week in the industrial/business market.

As a result of the growth of ENG the historical "take-or-pay" contracts are a small percentage of sales. This makes Eastern Natural Gas different from its competitors, who are largely selling gas purchased before the fall in the spot market last year. ENG now has gas costs significantly below its major competitors.

What Chris Godsmark fails to grasp is the unique size and integrated nature of Eastern Group. Eastern is extremely well positioned to lead and effectively compete in the newly emerging gas markets.

JF DEVANEY
Executive Chairman
Eastern Group plc
Ipswich

Thousands of smokers stop

Sir: Dr Vivienne Nathanson of the BMA suggests I am "wriggling" on the notion of tobacco being addictive (Letters, August 29) and she refers to the BMA's own booklet for members which I instigated, now telling us that advice contained therein not to use the word "addiction" is only there because of the disheartening message the word conveys.

Yet within the booklet the text goes on to say that "a balance needs to be struck, acknowledging the potential difficulties of stopping as well as the ease with which many smokers manage to stop". It makes clear that 2,000 smokers a day give up.

I might add that the vast majority

of those smokers stop without the aid of patches, hypnotherapy, courses, books, or any other aid. This is why we say we find it hard to accept that with 1.1 million ex-smokers in this country, tobacco can be classed as addictive in the sense that most people understand the word.

In passing, I am not from BAT, as Dr Nathanson appears to think. CLIVE TURNER
Tobacco Manufacturers' Association,
London SW1

Sir: We deeply regret that pressure on Medical Research Council units to attract commercial funding has engendered a climate of contemplation, let alone acceptance, of funds from British American Tobacco ("FR head suspended in tobacco cash row", 29 August).

Sir Austin Bradford Hill and Sir Richard Doll, distinguished former directors of the MRC Biostatistics Unit, led the research team in the 1950s and 1960s whose work was seminal in defining the enormous harm to health caused by cigarette smoking.

From personal experience we endorse the praise reported by Nicholas Timmins of Mary Rice's singular contribution to public relations at the Medical Research Council. That her sound advice was not heeded on this occasion will, we trust, be soon righted and her position vindicated by the council.

NICHOLAS E DAY
WALTER R GILKS
SHEILA M GORE
ANTHONY L JOHNSON
PAUL G SURTEES
Cambridge

Radio voice for the regions

Sir: While naturally pleased with the overall message of your leader "Let's turn up support for our national voice" (24 September), I was disappointed to read your reference to BBC local radio as an example of something the BBC does badly.

Some seven million people listen to BBC local radio stations in England each week, making it one of the BBC's most popular radio services. Moreover, during the 1990s BBC local radio has focused on being a speech-led service of comprehensive local news, current affairs information and discussion, enabling it to provide a truly distinctive and valued role in the local radio marketplace at a time when the commercial sector is predominantly offering music.

Sir: I am happy to assure Jan Morris (letter, 3 September) that there is no foundation whatsoever in the suggestion that BBC Radio Cymru is to be "abolished". Indeed, our commitment to Radio Cymru was underlined last year when the station underwent a major relaunch in order to attract the widest possible range of Welsh speakers and so ensure its survival into the 21st century.

GERAINT TALFAN DAVIES
Controller, BBC Wales
Cardiff

A real measure of prosperity

Sir: You argue (Business comment, 30 August) that the search for a better measure of national prosperity than GDP is futile.

You do not have to be much of an economist to know that GDP cannot tell the difference between good product and bad product, nor between warm and cold weather. If for example we gave up road accidents and their consequent costs, GDP would be lower and we would apparently be less prosperous. Similarly, if in a warm winter we spend less on fuel and woolies, the fall in GDP would indicate that we are the "poorer" for it.

You gave quite a lot of space to the Human Development Index in the 1996 Human Development Report published by the United Nations Development Programme. This index incorporates life expectancy and education as well as GDP per head, and might well be thought a better indication of real prosperity. Then you can have an income-disparity index, and a gender-disparity index. You can measure increase or decrease of natural capital resources. And so on.

None of these measures is perfect or definitive, but attempts to refine them do not deserve your tuppence dismissal as "ridiculous" or "daft".

CHARLES MANTON
E-mail: 100565.2430@CompuServe.COM

Shelter can still be indignant

Sir: I was pleased by Andreas Whitam Smith's recognition (article, 2 September) of Shelter's path-breaking role as a campaigning charity in the 1960s, and that the need for Shelter is still as great as to tackle the different housing problems of the 1990s.

However, I believe his arguments on the danger of government funding are too cynical and pessimistic. We welcome statutory funding wherever this is consistent with our aims and values. This money - inevitably and properly - comes with conditions that it must only be used for the activities defined in the contract. Yet this does not limit our freedom to use money given by our donors to campaign against government policies which we believe are wrong.

Last week Shelter took the Department of the Environment to the High Court over the withdrawal of housing for asylum seekers. We have campaigned to prevent changes to the homelessness laws which we believe to be damaging. We have strongly and publicly opposed cuts in investment in affordable housing and the withdrawal of benefit payments for both home owners and tenants.

Our experience is that government ministers and civil servants understand that we will not compromise our beliefs - and do not try to use statutory contracts as a lever to control what we say.

CHRIS HOLMES
Director
Shelter
London EC1

Paving the way for pedestrians

Sir: The most effective way of giving pedestrians priority over traffic (Letters, 3 September) is to combine the concepts of road crossing and road hump by paving intersections to the same level and with the same materials as the adjacent pavement.

A local authority having the vision to do this wherever possible, as part of a five- to 10-year strategy, to create a safe, convenient and continuous pedestrian network would enable all its citizens to "reclaim the streets". In particular, children, who are increasingly denied the opportunity of getting about on their own because of parental fears about vehicles driven at unsafe speeds, could have this basic freedom returned to them.

The findings of the recent Policy Studies Institute study *Speed Control and Transport Policy* suggests that the time lost to drivers on most journeys would be minimal.

Dr MAYER HILLMAN
The Policy Studies Institute
London NW1

Believers' duty to the young

Sir: Mr Stopes-Roe (Letters, 3 September) makes a common error. He assumes that the start positions of "God" and "no God" can be treated as having the same value.

I think an analogy can be drawn with the belief that there is traffic moving along a road which children may wish to cross. If there really is no traffic, then it makes no difference whether children are taught to look both ways, or that they can stumble across the road looking at their boots. If in reality there is traffic they must be taught only the first option.

Those who believe in God cannot allow themselves the luxury of teaching the young that it makes no difference whether they believe or stumble on paganism.

J RICHARD PATER
Kendal, Cumbria

Jury rationing

Sir: It might help Margaret Withers (letter, 3 September) and many others if jury service were rationed. I have been called four times, and am eligible for several more before being disqualified by age. The first occasion is instructive, leaving an admiration for our legal system. Further periods can be a burden and could surely be more usefully and fairly distributed. As for eliminating the useful contribution which the over-70s could make, does not this amount to "selection"?

EDLEEN BODEN
Wembley Park, Middlesex

American Milton

Sir: Peter Ackroyd's novel *Milton in America* ("Paradise rediscovered", 31 August) has John Milton fleeing England soon after the Restoration, taking ship to Puritan New England and founding a community called New Milton. He would not have needed to found New Milton, since Milton - named after him - was just getting off the ground. Milton, Massachusetts, was founded in 1662 and is now an attractive and affluent suburb of Boston.

ALICE H BIRD
Henley-on-Thames, Oxfordshire

analysis

Scotland the thwarted

Tony Blair says he is committed to the early establishment of an Edinburgh parliament. But Ian Bell argues that he has changed his mind and now intends to sabotage home rule

Let us pretend, just for the sake of argument, that Tony Blair is not entirely trustworthy. Let us assume, just as a bit of fun, the insidiously ridiculous: that the Labour leader could ever be capable of saying one thing while intending the opposite. Then let us consider devolution.

Scotland, we may guess, is not the word carved on Mr Blair's heart, but its future is a subject close to that magnificent organ, or so he says. The leader is committed to the speedy creation of a Scottish parliament for several reasons. First, it is the unfinished business of John Smith, his honoured predecessor. Secondly, it coheres with his ambitions for wider constitutional reform. Most important of all, a majority of Scots want it, and want it badly.

So far, so good. Scotland is not a place where Blair needs to win many hearts or (there are a few) minds. It is solidly Labour, if generally of the *ancien* variety. Given even a modest majority, Prime Minister Tony could impose a three-line whip on a one-line Scotland bill and encounter only modest protests from a few Tory Scots. (Sane Scottish Conservatives, it is worth pointing out, regard an Edinburgh parliament as the best chance available of restoring their fortunes.)

Threats of a rebellion from their lordships need not be taken seriously. Were things otherwise the entire Labour programme – the reform of the upper house in particular – would be at the mercy of the gerontocracy. No one believes that. Grumbling English Labour MPs would meanwhile be sent to trial by loyalty oath, much as Scottish “rebels” (guilty of rebelling in favour of party policy) have faced recently. In any case, England can have regional government if it wishes: what, precisely, is the beef?

And so, at the twitch of a magic wand, our prince could do just what he says he wants to do. The Opposition would oppose, because oppositions do, but democracy would be served, government improved, and the fabric of the British state given some overdue, near-

invisible mending. The Scots might even be grateful, though don't bank on it.

But none of this will happen, for reasons familiar and bizarre. First, Blair decided, without consulting his Scottish tribes (there's devolution for you), that a referendum was necessary. Shadow Scottish Secretary George Robertson had the very same notion, all on his own, but whether he had it before or after the leader made his decision is a point best left to parapsychologists.

For good measure, Blair announced that a matter this weighty deserved two questions, not one, three, or 33. The proposal that a Scottish parliament be permitted to vary the rate of tax by up to 3p in the pound was so important – unlike, say, Chancellor Brown's first budget – that it required its own question. All this, said loyalists confident of the public's supreme indifference to the

workings of the constitution, would “entrench” devolution. Naturally, it would also confound the Tories.

The trouble is, they don't sound too confounded. Some have had the gall to suggest that Blair has acquired cold feet, that he doesn't want the tax power, may not even want the parliament, and that it was no accident that he confused the issue in masterful style. Worse, a significant portion of the Scottish Labour Party has been drawn to the same, shamefully disloyal conclusion, belatedly realising that shadow chancellor Brown has a thing about income tax.

But people get uneasy about opposing referenda; it's not done. Tories who would never dream of offering Scots any sort of plebiscite (votes against the poll tax had to be registered by means of court orders, you'll recall) now enjoy asking why Labour's rebels are afraid of facing the people. If a parliament without taxation powers is better suited to Legoland than Edinburgh, why not put tax to the vote?

Back among the rebels, there is no such inspiring confidence. Having accepted the principle of a referendum (see how they bounce), they have been working throughout the summer to ensure that it contains only one simple question. After all, how many Scots remain who have not heard Labour say it wants an Edinburgh parliament with taxation powers? Vote for the parliament and you vote for the tax.

Given his remarkable candour in all things, and despite the ill-feeling the issue has caused in the party, it is hard to understand why Blair does not agree, but he does not. Last week, however, he stated candidly that if the Scottish Labour executive overturned the two-question plan he would overrule them. (How much devolution can one party stand?) He didn't actually say why, but later he made a few telephone calls, just to be on the safe side.

Thus invigorated, the executive met at Stirling at the weekend to get themselves out of the hole their leader had hewn. Then they commenced to dig,

and kept on digging until they struck compromise. That, at least, is what they are now calling it, mostly because they have no choice.

It is a brilliant idea (if you happen to be Tory). It is typically Labour (if you happen to be a Nationalist). It is moving evidence of how rebellious some people can be when their principles are at stake (but not if they are members of Labour's Scottish executive)! The two-question plebiscite remains: Blair wins. But there is a twist. Now a new Scottish parliament must on no account use its tax powers until it has called yet a further referendum.

Which is to say that Blair and his colleagues, desperate for devolution, have erected five (count them) hurdles in the way of a tax-raising Scottish parliament: a vote in a general election, a referendum question on the principle of home rule, a vote on taxation, elections to a Scottish parliament, and then another referendum on the use of the tax power, just to make doubly sure it never becomes an issue in anyone's mind.

This mind, for one, is to be entered for an Arts Council boggling award. Blair has called the executive's decision “mature”, leaving us to wonder what he really thought of the policy established by John Smith. Once there was a Scottish Question; now there is a clutch of quibbles, and John Major is making the most of it.

The constitution is one of the Prime Minister's pet issues, one which (he imagines) helped him win the last general election. In Glasgow for a fund-raising dinner this week, he was prompt with his alliterative insults, describing Labour's plans as a “steepchase of stupidity”. He refused to say if the Tories would accept devolution should Scots vote for it (Scottish Secretary Michael Forsyth has said they would) but managed a fairly effective demolition of a “botched” scheme. Given the Tories' standing in the polls (15 per cent) this amounts, however, to little more than harmless fun, at least in Scottish terms.

Then again, as both Major and the Scottish National Party realise, Labour's executive has done their work for them. A gift horse is running in the stupidity stakes. In what is fast beginning to resemble a repeat of the Seventies, the Nationalists are gaining ground while Labour falters, having piled on six points in the latest System 3 poll – a poll taken, moreover, before last weekend's debacle in Stirling. Labour are still 19 points clear (48 to the SNP's 29) but the Nationalists could not have asked for a better time, or excuse, to stage one of their periodic revivals.

It is possible, just about, to describe this comedy as a thing of simple errors. Certainly the fact that the fate of the entire devolution campaign, not to mention the credibility of the Scottish Labour Party, was left in the hands of one prospective



parliamentary candidate looks like a fairly big mistake in anyone's terms. Nevertheless, it was Mohammad Sarwar, the candidate for Govan, who alone cooked up the baffling compromise that Robertson and Blair were only too delighted to accept. What does that tell us?

At the very least, it says very little for the fabled efficiency of New Labour, never mind its grasp of political realities. More importantly, it raises some fairly profound questions about Blair's leadership. If this was an example of astuteness, Labour supporters in Scotland would probably risk being spared further outbreaks of cleverness. If this was a consequence of his

vaunted toughness, the people in his slipstream might begin to ask themselves just where toughness is leading them.

But there is a bigger worry, and one that is now commonplace in Scotland: that despite

Blair and his colleagues, desperate for devolution, have put five hurdles in the way of a tax-raising Scottish parliament

all he has said, the Labour leader does not always mean what he says. The chain of events since the first referendum plan was launched 10 weeks ago seems altogether

inconceivable now that Scotland will achieve anything meaningful under a Labour government. The consequences of that fact have yet to sink in, but they will begin to do so in

the weeks and months leading to the next general election. As George Robertson has been discovering this week, even Labour's famously loyal Scottish supporters have their limits. A plan that is near-impossible to explain, far less to enact, is a very bad plan.

Understandably enough, opponents have taken to describing this as a dog's breakfast. In reality, the alimentary throughput of Fido's *petit déjeuner* bears a closer resemblance to what Blair has deposited on Scotland's doorstep. The pup has now been sold. Next stop: Downing Street.

Ian Bell is a columnist with the Scotsman.

We're good to wood

54%
Fuelwood

12%
Pulpwood

7%
Other industrial

27%
Sawlogs

Source: FAO 1992

Only 12% of the World's production of wood is used in papermaking.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION DIAL THE FAX BACK NUMBER 0839 353036
Calls are charged at 39p per minute (cheap rate and 49p per minute at all other times)
OR WRITE TO: RIVINGTON ROAD, WESTLEA, SWINDON, SN6 7SD
TELEPHONE: 01793 879229 FAX: 01793 886182

Issued by the NEWSPRINT & NEWSPAPER INDUSTRY ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION GROUP

A coming-together of ensembles

The way people write menus evolves as fast as the way cooking evolves, perhaps even faster.

I don't mean the way people actually use handwriting on menus, although even that changes from time to time. In modern days, it has become more and more usual to employ an angular italic script on menus, which looks ever so calligraphic but does make the deciphering of the menu that much harder, as all the tall letters tend to resemble each other, as do the small ones at a lower level, and the handwriting ends up as an LS Lowry drawing of a line of people walking into the wind. This means that when you find something on the menu masquerading as “putrid mullet”, or indeed to decode “Tall soup with lemongrass”.

But the actual language of menus is changing as well as their handwriting. Not just in the introduction of words like “panfried”, which is a puzzling word, because you can't fry

things anywhere but in a pan, so why not just say “fried”? Nor in the gradual invasion of words like “coulis” and “sabayon”, which have come from some dictionary known only to chefs and menu-writers and mean nothing to the ordinary public. No, I don't mean just those foolishnesses. I mean the way in which dishes are increasingly being given personalities of their own.

I first noticed it in the addition of the phrase “with its”, as in “Roast guinea fowl with its accompanying chestnut and sage sauce”. Why do they always say “with its accompanying chestnut and sage sauce”? Why not just say “Roast guinea fowl with chestnut and sage sauce”? It means the same and is shorter. Why bother to say “with its accompanying sauce”, as if the guinea fowl had turned up at the kitchen that night with a suitcase full of its own sauce? It sounds like one of those announcements they make at grand balls, when the footman takes a name and says loudly: “The Archbishop of Canterbury, with Mrs Carey!” as if the wife or part-



Miles Kingston

ner was a piece of designer luggage.

Or perhaps it is like one of those notices you get outside French towns which are trying to tempt passing tourists to stay, and which list the attractions right there on the town sign. “Issy-les-Deux-Tours – ses moulins, son château, son marché! Issy-les-Deux-Tours, with its accompanying mills and castle and market ... Roast guinea fowl, with its fabulous chestnut and sage sauce ...

In any case, I now realise that the menu habit is different from the French town habit, because it is definitely developing sexual overtones. No longer do people say

“Roast guinea fowl with its accompanying chestnut and sage sauce”. They have now started saying things like “A duo of roast guinea fowl and chestnut and sage sauce”, or even “A rendezvous of roast guinea fowl and chestnut and sage sauce”. You must have noticed it too. Words like “duo” and “rendezvous” are all over the menus these days, and if they don't have sexual overtones, I'll eat my hat with a duo of its scarf.

There was a time when menu-writing only had overtones of *haute couture*, and painting and decorating. Things had their dressing and coating, or were encased or wrapped in coatings. Indeed I have even seen things on a menu “draped” in other things, but I think “coated” was always the favourite word, perhaps because you can use coats both in *haute couture* and in interior decor. Whenever I read on a menu that a fillet of turbot, say, “coated in yoghurt and then sprinkled with sesame seeds”, I always had a vision of something being given a fresh lick of

paint and then pebbledashed. But now all the painting and decorating, and dressing and tailoring, is over. The steaks have been trimmed. The portions have been dressed. Let the partnerships take place. Let the banns be read. Let the duos and the rendezvous break out all over the menu. Let mango cohabit with coriander, let tomato lie down with mint, let lime go with lemongrass ...

Do you think I am going too far? But don't forget that the language of the menu has always been partly sexual. Don't forget that things have always been served (an ambiguous word in itself) on a bed of other things. Don't forget that chefs are getting younger and younger and that this must be reflected sooner or later in the menu. The fact that people like me now start blushing as soon as they start reading modern menus will not affect progress. I shall just have to get used to it. I suppose I should be grateful that it is only duos and rendezvous appearing on our menus, and not *ménages à trois* or orgies.

هكذا من الأصل

Rum things, literary festivals. Nobody knows why people go to them. (To meet bookish, stay-at-home types? To listen to politicians pretending to be keen on Trollope? A horrible prospect. To acquire a signed copy of the recently reissued first poetry collection by someone you have hitherto never heard of? I expect that's it.) Not a single on-stage insight into the creative process has been knowingly offered by a writer or gleaned by an audience since the lit-fest thing began at Cheltenham in 1949. No increased levels of writer-reader understanding have been recorded during "signing sessions" in draughty tents or hastily co-opted "bookshops". Yet these curious excursions from the private act of reading to the public phone contributions from the floor and lashings of wine, have become the biggest growth industry in literary circles, though their significance remains a mystery.

Until now, that is. At Dartington Hall in Devon, where I passed a blissful weekend at the "Ways With Words" festival (sponsored by us, *naturelement*), it all suddenly fell into place. Despite the presence of poets, novelists, thriller writers and thespians, the central dynamic wasn't about literature at all. It was about psychotherapy.

Everywhere you looked, it was Shrinkin'. Adam Phillips, the curly-browed child psychiatrist with the gnomish prose style and the fancy titles (*On Kissing, Tickling and Being Bored*) was gilled



John WALSH

A mystery solved. What are literary festivals for? All became clear at Dartington Hall last weekend ...

about his writings and retreated behind a wall of baffling pronouncements, at least one of which turned the apprehension of literature into a kind of creative inattention ("Reading for me is like thinking - I'm not aware of doing it, and I forget it immediately. I can't remember if they catch the whale in *Moby Dick*, though I've read it a dozen times").

Ruth Rendell submitted to Anthony Clare's analytical embrace in a bookish version of *In the Psychiatrist's Chair*, but failed to reveal anything about why she was so keen on wrecked and desolate characters. She did, however, reveal two suggestive things: that she was an only child, and that she was a stickler for punctuation. On an impulse, Dr Clare asked the ranks of Ruth fans if they shared either condition,

and a forest of hands rose. Could 72 per cent of the audience really have been solitary time-obsessives? Or did they just want to star in the next Rendell thriller?

But it was the Doris Lessing experience that really decamped with the digestive. Ms Lessing, a writer of steely and uncompromising mien, is famously unimpressed by people who ask about how much of her fiction is autobiography. Yet for an hour on stage, tactfully steered by Jan Dalley (my glamorous opposite number from the *Independent on Sunday*), Lessing talked happily away about the personal feelings behind her new novel, *Love Again*, which concerns a woman falling cataclysmically in love in her sixties. Doris couldn't be drawn to name names, but her disengagement of inconvenient passion

made the audience swoon with empathy. Even when she demanded, with the bitterness of hindsight: "I mean, what is it for? What is the use of love?", she got a reply. "It's very good for you physically," said a pert thirtysomething at the back of the hall, "it makes my hair shine." "How odd this is," commented Jan Dalley. "Nobody seems to want to ask anything about literary form ..."



Doris Lessing: "What is the use of love?"

Extraordinary how the right setting enables the things that are said. Virtually any sentiment, however banal, uttered in the

Great Hall at Dartington instantly takes on the force and quality of myth, so grand is the circumambient architecture. The mile-high roof with bare timber beams, the El Cid banners like dangling magic carpets, the blackened grate approximately the size of a railway station, the vast blank marble wall against which the speakers declaim their stuff - it's like a dream of the medieval "mead-hall" through which, it was said, a sparrow's flight represented man's life (at least it is when you've consumed enough of the festival's excellent House White). You could read the list of vitamins on a box of Chios and it would come out sounding like *Gormenghast*.

Another extraordinary thing you encounter is the unmistakable whiff of lust. Amid the ranks of arty ladies painting the noble towers in watercolours, the female philosophy dons in their kiss-me quick cardigans and the phalanx of burly men crashed out on the greensward like fallen warriors, an unusual heat seems to build up at the languorous end of summer. "Look at the dreamboat over there in the Rapunzel locks," remarked a passing back to *The Indie's* David Aaronovitch. "I wonder if by any chance she's anxious to get into journalism?" "Not half as anxious," replied Aaronovitch smartly, "as journalism is to get into her."

Remember Irina Ratushinskaya? The Russian dissident poet with the schoolgirl looks and the beauty spot, jailed for four

years in a Soviet labour camp, where she wrote in her head the verses that became the John Majorishly-titled *Grey is the Colour of Hope*, was a big hit at Dartington. She told stories of her homeland and received a standing ovation. My favourite one was about the encounter between a Western friend and the people of Chechnya. The friend ran a harmless travelling puppet theatre, amusing children in towns and villages in the former Soviet Union (this was pre-1989). Nobody, unfortunately, advised her about the hard men of the soon-to-break-away republic. The puppeteers drove into town, hired a theatre, advertised their performance and set up the show. Just before it started, one of the performers peeped through the curtains and saw, not ranks of expectant children, but a score of grimly unsmiling, hairy-mugged Chechens holding guns. As the show got under way, the theatre manager, hitherto all smiles, appeared, looking frantic. "You must get away," he said. "At the interval, gather all your stuff and get in my van. Otherwise they will shoot you in the second act." The puppeteers did as they were told, drove half for leather, heard some wild rifle shots and escaped with only a few bullet holes in the screen. What had gone wrong? "In Chechnya," explained the manager, "the wolf is a sacred animal, wild and free. The most unclean animal is the swine. I did not realise your puppet show would be *The Three Little Pigs and the Big Bad Wolf*."

Abused by tinkering fools

Public art, once a symbol of national pride, has become more a source of embarrassment than an inspiration to the British people

Harrogate had it coming. The idiot councillors of that distinguished old spa town painted a street red, beige and green in order, as they usually put it, "to brighten the place up a bit". It rained; the new, high-tech, French paint failed to dry and shoppers left sticky, tutti-frutti footprints all over the place. Good.

Meanwhile, there is the superficially unrelated matter of André Durand who paints really bad pictures of the Royal Family. One showed Prince Charles on a rearing horse with



BRYAN APPLEYARD

William and Harry wearing baseball caps. Another showed an almost naked Diana tiptoeing through the waves on a glass globe. His latest, apparently, shows Diana again, this time eating with her two sons in Piza Express.

The link between the two is the way the public realm here has become a serious embarrassment. Nobody knows what to do with it, so noble traditions are abandoned to be abused by tinkering fools. Town planning becomes street daubing, royal portraits become glib cartoons. In Hyde Park appalling new gates honouring the Queen Mother assault the eye. The Barbican attempts to add symbolic weight to its mannerist-brutalist arts centre by adorning it with distasteful gold statues. Only in Trafalgar Square where the last plinth remains gloriously empty does a certain tact and honesty prevail - if you've

nothing to say, don't say it. In respectable official circles, vain attempts are made to cling to the pathetic fragments of past grandeur. British embassies around the world are earnestly provided with reproductions of a Gerald Kelly portrait of the Queen, complete with curtain and column, a sad little emanation from the tomb of classicism and the grave of Reynolds. I mean, old boy, it looks about right, doesn't it? No, it does not.

Perhaps it is unfair to blame Britain or modernity for the crisis in the public realm. This week Christie's sold a Trumbull portrait of George Washington at the Battle of Trenton from the Marquis de Bute's collection. It was originally rejected by the city of Charleston as being "too heroic and historical in flavour". What on earth did they want? Well, of course, they wanted a hero-less, history-less democracy. Democracy as a dragging-down rather than a pulling-up goes back much further than the National Union of Teachers.

It was the Americans who perpetuated that odd, corporate desire to put something - anything - called art in front of their office blocks. The phenomenon was memorably described by Tom Wolfe as "The Tird in the Plaza". Art, the executive's education told him, was something to do with the distilled aspirations of the people. But, sadly, by then art had strayed far from any such aspirations and the plazas, even with their art, looked emptier than the Trafalgar Square plinth.

Andy Warhol may have revived the portrait, but only as a craft, self-regarding denial of individuality. The last chance anybody had to get a portrait painted of themselves in any meaningful, reverent sense was by employing John Singer Sargent in Edwardian London.



Similarly, the last time we could build appropriately resonant monuments was just after the First World War when Lutyens built his awesome battlefield memorial at Thiepval - a work in which the classical tradition sombrely contemplates its own Nemesis in the trenches.

Now the problem lies on both sides of the public-art equation. The public realm is only public in the sense that it is a vacancy, somewhere that belongs to nobody and everybody. And art, lacking a coherent audience and a communicable language, drifts into painted self-examination. This can produce great art, but it cannot produce great public art. As Eliot knew, as Picasso

knew, the "equals" sign in the equation was severed somewhere around 1920 and the two sides drifted apart.

Subsequent attempts to unite them may have been noble, but they only drew attention to the problem. Henry Moore's altar in Wren's St Stephen Walbrook in the City of London is all very well, but it still looks, depending on your perspective, like a stone Camembert or a gross druidic intrusion into a supremely sophisticated piece of architecture. Moore, I am sure, would see and understand Wren's subtle balancing of the classical dome and the gothic cross. But, in place, the two aesthetics can only result in a

contradiction.

Perhaps we should look to Anthony Gormley's huge Angel of the North sculpture to be placed on a hill by the A1. Here is a piece of modern heroism in the public realm - the aircraft-like wings spread, precariously unsupported, across the landscape to astound the passing salesmen in their air-conditioned Mondeos. Plus it is an angel, a clear and traditional symbol of transcendence and significance, and it is "of the North", an attempt to evoke the kind of regional identity that was utterly lost in the corporate modernism of the Fifties and Sixties.

Well, I am prepared to give Gormley the benefit of the

doubt. But there are problems. The angel seems strained as if it could only be an angel at all these times by having its angelness stretched to the limits of aerodynamic feasibility. The artist seems to be trying too hard to reach the public realm. Certainly, it is better than the Queen Mother's gates in Hyde Park, but it suffers from the same kind of exaggeration. The gates, in their wild contortions, strain to be meaningful and, in doing so, reveal their meaninglessness. The angel features on the brink of the same failure. Possibly, such testing is what art must now do if it aspires to be public.

Of course, it could be that we simply choose the wrong artists. David Hockney is prone to twee

domesticity, but some of his earlier paintings did have a form of contemporary monumentality that at least suggested the possibility of a public role. And there have been other modern artists - Jackson Pollock, Mark

Would Damien Hirst make a better job of royal portraiture than André Durand?

Rothko - whose striving for an abstract sense of self or spirituality seemed to show a genuine artistic awareness of the difficulty of reaching out from the canvas or the plinth.

But sadly, in Britain at least, to embrace any such figures as laureates of public art would require a heroic suppression of our national sin of literalness. We always want to be able to say that what we see is what we get. So they paint the street in

Town planning becomes street daubing, royal portraits become glib cartoons

Harrogate because, in their literalness, the councillors think you make the place more colourful by splashing colour around. Public art cannot be literal, it must be symbolic. If there are no symbols and nothing to symbolise, there's no way to go public, to persuade people to believe that these stones, bronzes or oils are anything more than mute, insignificant minerals.

THE CENTRAL FACTS FROM THE COURSES YOU ALWAYS MEANT TO TAKE, IN 25 LECTURES

A cynical definition of moral philosophy is the finding of excuses for doing what we like. But have you noticed how politicians and functionaries say, "There's only a moral responsibility" when they mean there's no money involved? That shows what a lot of people think about the status of ethics.

This line of thought was perfectly illustrated in Orwell's novel *Keep the Aspidochelone*, where he has Gordon Comstock discover that the modern world has gone through I Corinthians XV printing the word "money" where St Paul wrote "love" or "charity". Thus, "If I have not money, I am nothing ...", etc.


There are more serious considerations. For example, at times, in one breath, we insist that morality is "a matter of personal opinion" - something about which people should "make up their own minds" - and in the next breath we talk about universal human rights.

This idea that morals are personal value judgements is very new. It goes back only as far as the 1930s and the so-called "emotivist" view of ethics taught by A. J. Ayer and C. L. Stevenson. According to this theory, when I say that something is right or good I am only expressing a personal feeling and, perhaps, trying to persuade you to have this feel-

ing as well. But if morality is only a matter of feelings, what becomes of moral argument and rational persuasion? Surely I want the passer-by to buy one of my flags because he thinks my charity is a good cause, not just because he happens to feel like it.


Disconcertingly, both Ayer and Stevenson agreed that, if reasonable persuasion fails in ethical disputes, then logically force is no worse as a persuader. And this philosophy was in its heyday while Hitler's cronies were providing the libretto for *Cabaret*!

Can you do good by accident, or must you intend it? If good is defined merely as pleasant consequences, then it would seem that the will has no place in morality - but that is just where most of us would like to think that the will is of supreme importance. Incidentally, perhaps someone will help me out with a difficulty in Christian morality I have never been able to surmount. Here we are enjoined, nay, commanded, to love our neighbour. As I look at my neighbour I realise that this requires an enormous act of will. But it is precisely the will which is impotent according to St Paul, who defined our moral predicament more acutely than anyone before or since: "The good I would, that I do not; but the evil if I would not, that I do."



WEEK 5 DAY 4
Ethics
VISITING LECTURER: Peter Mullen

*A final examination will be set at the end of term.
All graduates will be awarded a diploma and the ten best results will receive a year's subscription to the Independent*



Ten out of ten for psychological acuteness Paul, but where does it leave me morally?

Secularised democracies measure right and wrong by the amount of pleasure or pain occasioned by them. Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832) even went so far as to devise a pleasure-pain calculus, the more accurately to work out ethical consequences. The system is known as Utilitarianism - and it was scorned by Nietzsche as "big philosophy".

How do we measure pleasure and on what scale do we rate it? Is Bach better than Sid Snot and the Drifters? Bentham was an unabashed egalitarian, and he reckoned that when it comes to the measurement of pleasurable consequences, "pushpin is as good as poetry." Some pure and non-elitist strain in us all wants to agree with Bentham, but then a little voice pipes up within: "then what is the purpose of education - something else about which the modern professors to be very keen?"

Are there any moral absolutes? The Book of Exodus gives us ten commandments, but Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) seemed to understand that there can only ever be one moral absolute: prescribe more than one and you lay up impossible moral dilemmas for yourself, when the occasion arises that two of

your absolutes come into conflict. What, for example, if it comes to a choice between not telling lies and protecting the innocent? Asked what we should do our duty. But isn't that just a tautology? What else should I do except my duty, when my duty means what I should do? Kant tries to answer this through his doctrine of the Categorical Imperative: act always so that the maxim of your action can be willed as a general rule (What if everybody did it?). Unfortunately, this "imperative" allows you to formulate your own version of the intention underlying your action.

Existentialists do things differently. Sartre (1905-1980) denied all moral systems in the name of freedom. I am not essentially obliged to do anything - because my existence precedes my essence. He said, "It is unfortunate for Existentialists that God doesn't happen to exist." And if there is any morality it consists in doing what I like. To do otherwise is to act "in bad faith". It can also be unfortunate for Existentialists that humankind with its tiresome ethical theories exists. As Sartre - like the baby screaming in his playpen - complained, "Hell is other people."

Tomorrow: Truth

UNSECURED PERSONAL LOANS

12.9% APR

At this rate it pays to go direct.

You can take out an unsecured Personal Loan for any reason with Hamilton Direct Bank, and take advantage of our fixed rates.

TYPICAL EXAMPLE	A LOAN OF £5,000	What you save with Hamilton Direct Bank
	APR*	at month repayment
Hamilton Direct Bank	12.9%	£132.26
Standard Bank PLC	17.9%	£143.35
National Westminster Bank plc	14.9%	£136.56

*The rates quoted are for new customers. Existing customers may be eligible for a different rate. Rates are correct as at 29/08/96.

NEW REDUCED RATES

12.9% APR
on Loans from £5,000 to £10,000.

14.9% APR
on Loans from £10,000 to £14,999.

HAMILTON
Direct Bank
A Division of RBC Bank plc

We have the money to hand.

CALL THE 24 HOUR HOTLINE FOR MORE INFO NOW ON
FREEPHONE 0800 30 3000

QUOTING REF 93004/250N

*Typical example: If you borrow £5,000 over 60 months at 12.9% APR, the monthly repayment is £109.36 and the total amount payable is £6,561.60. The monthly repayment for the same loan at 17.9% APR would be £143.35 and the total amount payable is £8,600.20. The monthly repayment for the same loan at 14.9% APR would be £136.56 and the total amount payable is £8,193.60. The rates quoted are for new customers. Existing customers may be eligible for a different rate. Rates are correct as at 29/08/96. The rates are correct as at 29/08/96. The rates are correct as at 29/08/96. The rates are correct as at 29/08/96.

The Ven David Scott

A patriot of the old school: Amery campaigning in the Brighton Pavilion by-election, March 1969

+ Kenneth Riches

David Scott, priest: born 19 June 1924; ordained deacon 1952, priest 1953; Assistant Chaplain, London University 1958-59; Perpetual Curate, Old Barnby 1959-66; Vicar of Boston, Lincolnshire 1966-75; Canon and Prebendary of Lincoln Cathedral 1971-89; Rural Dean of Holland East 1971-75; Archdeacon of Stow 1975-89; Vicar of Hackthorn with Cold Hanworth 1975-89; Priest-in-charge of North and South Carlton 1978-89; Chaplain to the Queen 1983-94; married (one son, one daughter); died 31 August 1996.

cluded the Jean-Marie Straub-Danielle Huillet film *Der Tod des Empedokles* (1987), shot on the slopes of Mount Etna, and as one of the many peculiar neighbours in the instant cult classic of the early Nineties, *Delicatessen* (1991).

Richard Chatten

Mario Lipert (Howard Vernon): actor; born Baden, Switzerland 15 July 1914; died 24 July 1996.

[illegible]

Major of Newcastle in 1994.

In his maiden speech in April 1966 Brown described how the people of Tyneside are regarded as Georgians the world over, not as people from Newcastle, Gateshead, South Shields or Tynemouth. "Geordie" is a regional term quite as specific as "cockney". The sense of place is almost regarded as a local national anthem. Is there any honourable member who will confess his lack of culture by saying that he has not heard of "Blaydon Races"? The identification of people on both sides of the river with Newcastle United Football Club is considerable formal evidence of a shared identity.

It is undeniable that the Middle East and in the Italian campaign. Years later when he presided over the Army Board he said that he chuckled at how a one-stripe 20-year-old acting lance-corporal (unpaid) in the Signals could chair a meeting of distinguished generals. "And they take it so well."

On demobilisation he went back and trained further as a gas fitter, being promoted to Inspector in 1949. For 16 years he was the secretary and agent of the Newcastle West Constituency Labour Party, serving

Ernest Poppolewell, the railwayman MP, with the total loyalty that was one of Brown's hallmarks in political life. He stuck vehemently by his friends, and he was a good friend to have. He was also among the first of the 1966 intake to be promoted to a government job. I remember well his first debate as joint parliamentary secretary to the Ministry of Transport. It was late at night and he had against him two then not very important, very junior, now now ministers, but he held his own. I quote from *Hansard*, 17 December 1968:

Mr Michael Heseltine: I did not put this question specifically, but perhaps the honourable gentleman will say

When the debate was finished I said to Brown that he'd done jolly well. "Ah" he said, "I was lucky that I had two such easy Tories against me!"

Transport had been one of Brown's main interests - albeit he was sponsored by the General and Municipal Workers' Union - and as a Newcastle

After the second election of 1974 Brown was given the job for which he will be remembered, as Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Army. In circumstances of cuts and where *Labour ministers by the very nature of the situation are often not well received by the Service chiefs*, Brown was exceedingly well liked and believed to be a man of total

The changes which will be made are only those which are essential if the re-organisation of the Army is to be thorough and effective.

Part of Brown's success as an Army minister was because service personnel felt that he really cared about them. On 17 January 1979, I listened to him tackle the question of estranged service wives and the policy towards married quarters. He recognised that the special conditions and demands of a service career often posed considerable difficulties. A serviceman has to be housed near

his place of work to meet the requirements of the Service which often involve long and irregular hours and the need to be readily available on standby.

When most people leave the House of Commons that is the end of their public life. Brown, who was a man totally without self-importance, threw himself back into local government helping the disadvantaged and doing as much as he could to ameliorate the effects of the decline in shipbuilding. That his colleagues made him Lord Mayor was a tribute to a thoroughly decent man supported by a wonderful wife, Margjorie, of more than 50 years.

Tam Dalyell
Robert Crafter Brown, engineer, trade-union official and politician: born Scotswood, Newcastle 16 May 1921; MP (Labour) for Newcastle West 1966-83, Newcastle North 1983-87; Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Transport 1968-70; Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Social Security 1974; Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence for the Army 1974-79; Lord Mayor of Newcastle 1994-95; married 1945 Marjorie Hogg (one son, one daughter); died Newcastle 3 September 1996.

His lean frame occasionally to be seen lurking ominously in Hollywood productions shot in Europe, like John Frankenheimer's *The Train* (1964) and Woody Allen's *Love and Death* (1975), Howard Vernon's villains usually embodied austere Prussian monomania rather than simple malice, as evidenced by his Professor von Braun in Jean-Luc Godard's *Alphaville* (1965). As the techno-

cratic ruler of that film's eponymous city of the future (where his portrait dominates every wall), Vernon portrayed a man who when eventually confronted is visibly wearied by the burdensome responsibilities of running a police state.

Sometimes he was on the side of virtue, as when he played the stiff-necked Lanton in Walerian Borowczyk's unbelievable *Docteur Jekyll et les femmes* (1981),

and his best film role was also his most sympathetic (although under a perverse constraint), in Jean-Pierre Melville's *Le Silence de la mer* (1949). Based on the celebrated wartime novel by Vercors, it centred on Vernon as Werner von Ebrenac, a cultured and sensitive Francophile German officer billeted during the Occupation in an anti-pathetic French household with whom he desperately wants to

be friends, and whose animosity he spends most of the film attempting imploringly to overcome while they respond with the silent treatment.

Born in Switzerland to a Swiss father and an American mother, and raised in the United States, he returned to Europe to finish his schooling in Nice and Berne. Initially destined for the hotel trade, he worked in Egypt and then

Zurich, before moving to Paris to become an actor, where he was at first a tap dancer, performing at the Casino de Paris and Le Palace.

During the Occupation he supported himself by giving dancing lessons and in 1945 made his film debut in a resistance drama, *Un Ami viendra ce soir*. To his distaste he was immediately typecast as a Nazi, although it was in one such role

Melville called upon Vernon again to lend atmosphere to *Bob le flambeur* (1956) and *Léon Morin, prêtre* (1961), and he played a professional assassin in Fritz Lang's last film, *Die Tausend Augen des Dr Mabuse* (1960). In 1962 he starred in *Gritos en la noche*, a visceral medical horror thriller in which he was the Awful Dr Orloff (the

title of the film in America), an indefatigable plastic surgeon he was to play several more times in the course of over 35 more films with director Jesus Franco over the next 25 years, including a couple of appearances as Count Dracula in *Dracula contra Frankenstein* (1972) and *A Filha de Dracula* (1973).

More upmarket productions in which he later appeared in-

cluded the Jean-Marie Straub-Danielle Huillet film *Der Tod des Empedokles* (1987), shot on the slopes of Mount Etna, and as one of the many peculiar neighbours in the instant cult classic of the early Nineties, *Delicatessen* (1991).

Richard Chatten

Mario Lipert (Howard Vernon); actor: born Baden, Switzerland 15 July 1914; died 24 July 1996.

BIRTHS

FLINT: To Jane (née Leach) and Keith, on 29 August, a daughter, Elizabeth May, a sister for Samuel and Patrick.

SPENCE: To Emily (née Baldwin) and Adrian, a daughter. Eleanor Mary Frances, born 17 July, a sister for Patrick.

Announcements for Gazette BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS (Births, Adoptions, Marriages, Deaths, Memorial services, Wedding anniversaries, In Memoriam) should be sent in writing to the Gazette Editor.

**Births,
Marriages
& Deaths**

The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL, telephoned to 0171-293 2011 (24-hour answering machine 0171-293 2012) or faxed to 0171-293 2010, and are charged at £6.50 a line (VAT extra).

Marriages

Mr G. Randall and Miss N. Harvey
The marriage took place on Saturday 31 August 1996 at St Andrew's Church, Moretonhamstead, Devon, between Mr Gary Randall, elder son of Mrs J. Randall, of Gisborne, New Zealand, and Mr J. Randall, of Auckland, and Miss Nicola Harvey, only daughter of Major and Mrs A. Harvey, of Moretonhamstead. The bride was attended by Anya Harvey, William

Birthdays

Lord Alexander of Weedon QC, chairman, National Westminster Bank, 60; Mr Malcolm Allison, football manager, 69; Miss Mcg Beresford, former General Secretary, CND, 59; Mr Johnny Briggs, actor, 61; Mr Dick Clement, director and scriptwriter, 59; Dr Jack Colover, neurologist, 83; Miss Tracy Edwards, yachtswoman, 34; Sir Robin Fearn,

former ambassador to Spain, 62; Dr David Fussey, Vice-Chancellor, Greenwich University, 53; Mr David Graham, former Chief Constable, Cheshire, 63; Dame Elizabeth Hedley-Miller, former senior civil servant, 73; Professor Julian Hunt, Chief Executive, Meteorological Office, 55; Sir Francis Loyd, former colonial administrator, 80; Mr Kevin McNamara MP, 62; Sir John Mummery, a Lord Justice of Appeal, 58; Mr Bob Newhart, actor and comedian, 67; Canon Peter Pilkington, Chairman, Broadcasting Complaints Commis-

sion, 63; Miss Jean Rankine, Deputy Director, British Museum, 55; Mr Al Stewart, rock singer, 51; Mr George Treblett, author, journalist and bookseller, 57; Miss Raquel Welch, actress, 56; Professor Sir Denis Wilkinson, nuclear physicist, 74.

Anniversaries

Births Louis XIV, the "Sun King" of France, 1638; Johann Christian Bach, composer, 1735; Robert Ferguson, poet, 1750; Caspar David Friedrich, painter, 1774; Giacomo

John Wisden, cricket records compiler, 1826; Arthur Koestler, author, 1905; John Cage, composer, 1912; *Death*: Pieter Brueghel the Elder, painter, 1569; Group Captain Sir Douglas Bader, Second World War, 1920. On this day: the US declared its neutrality in the Second World War, 1939; the Allies liberated Brussels, 1944. Today is the Feast Day of St Bertinus, St Genebald of Laon, St Laurence Giustiniani and Saints Urban and Theodore and their Companions.

[illegible]

هَذَا مِنْ الْأَصْلِ

The Ven David Scott

Economic view: Labour's fiscal beauty contest 23
Market report: Punters bank on Schroders 22
Investment column: BBA shows its fibre 18

CITY & BUSINESS EDITOR: JEREMY WARNER

Morgan asks court to freeze fund manager's personal assets

JILL TREANOR and NIC CICUTTI

Morgan Grenfell Asset Management last night moved to freeze the assets of Peter Young, its suspended fund manager, as part of its investigation into suspected irregularities in three funds in which £1.4bn is invested.

An injunction was taken out in conjunction with Royal Bank of Scotland, trustee to the two funds he ran, Morgan Grenfell declined comment when asked if this should be taken as an allegation that Mr Young was suspected of using the funds' assets for personal gain or fraud.

Lawyers acting for Morgan Grenfell have also engaged specialist financial investigators to help their enquiries into the mystery surrounding the three European investment funds.

A senior executive from Network Security Management, a subsidiary of Hambros, the merchant bankers, called yesterday at the home of Mr Young, to arrange a meeting with him.

Allan McDonagh, deputy managing director of NSM, confirmed that his firm was working on behalf of Morgan Grenfell. He added that NSM specialised, among other things, in fraud detection. But he said: "I wouldn't read anything into that."

Neighbours at Mr Young's newly built, luxury detached home in Amersham, Buckinghamshire, said they were mystified by what had happened to their latest arrival in their small exclusive close.

One person, who refused to be named, said Mr Young had barely moved into his £400,000 home a few weeks earlier. "He seems like quite a nice person but we haven't seen anything of him or his children yet, so it's hard to make a judgement."

Mr Young left home at 10.30am yesterday with his wife. He said he had been told not to make any comments about the Morgan Grenfell affair.

The home, which has a three-car garage, remained empty throughout the day. There were signs that its occupants have only recently moved in. Electrical work to the gates is still not completed and the lawn appears to have been freshly planted.

It is thought that regulators are focusing on a number of mysterious unlisted companies, many of them Norwegian, in which Mr Young had invested money belonging to some 90,000 investors.

Enquiries among eight Norwegian specialist analysts yesterday failed to find any who recognised the names of some of the firms in which Mr Young had invested.

The European Growth Trust staked 1.31 per cent and 1.00 per cent respectively of its assets in Norwegian companies Syteminvest and Waferproof Holding, neither of which rang any bells with the specialists.

One market source speculated that Mr Young could have been using some of the unlisted firms to buy his investments in other companies, which had become unprofitable after stocks in the companies plunged this year. Another said: "There are some rather odd companies here. I am not sure if the fund is the instrument or the victim."

Among the recognised Norwegian quoted companies, the share price of Sysdeo Group in which the European Capital Growth Fund had invested 8.17 per cent of its assets, had fallen to around 45 pence yesterday from levels around 225 pence in late February.

Dealing in the funds, suspended to investigate "potential



Potential frozen asset: Peter Young's £400,000 house in Amersham, Buckinghamshire, which he bought recently

Main photograph: David Rose

irregularities in the valuation of unquoted securities", was due to resume today.

But in an effort to instill investor confidence in the funds, Deutsche Bank, which owns Deutsche Morgan Grenfell, bought up many of these unlisted securities at a price estimated to have cost the German banking giant at least £150m.

Mr Young, 38, ran two of the funds suspended at the start of the week - Morgan Grenfell European Growth Trust, a unit trust, and Dublin-listed Morgan Grenfell European Capital Growth Fund. The third fund, Morgan Grenfell Europa, is run by Stewart Armer, who has not been suspended and is not under investigation.

Carnegie, the broker cited in European Growth Trust annual report as having taken 10 per cent of the broking commissions paid out by the fund last year, declined to comment.

It also emerged that Ice Securities, hired to value some of the securities in the fund, had been visited by the regulator. Christopher Woodgate, chairman of the eight partner boutique, said it had been hired in July to value "certain assets".

Meanwhile, all large fund managers are checking and tightening up their control systems this week, according to senior executives in the industry who said the Morgan Grenfell problem underlined the need for perpetual vigilance.

The Association of Unit Trusts and Investment Funds welcomed Morgan Grenfell's promise that no investor will lose money. Philip Warland, the chief executive, said: "The reputation of the industry is jealously guarded; no unit trust investor has ever lost any money as a result of irregularities."

However, many of the 90,000 investors in the two unit trusts and the fund at the centre of the investigation have been flooding their financial advisers with worried calls. Sean Kingston, a director of Hargreaves Lansdown, a Bristol financial adviser, who is an investor in the funds, said it had taken more than 100 calls from "extremely concerned" investors.

vector has ever lost any money as a result of irregularities."

However, many of the 90,000 investors in the two unit trusts and the fund at the centre of the investigation have been flooding their financial advisers with worried calls. Sean Kingston, a director of Hargreaves Lansdown, a Bristol financial adviser, who is an investor in the funds, said it had taken more than 100 calls from "extremely concerned" investors.

Labour to go softly softly on fat cats

MICHAEL HARRISON

Labour yesterday backed away sharply from plans to clamp down on boardroom excesses by statutory means in favour of an approach based on voluntary codes of conduct and informal pressure from institutional shareholders.

The party had been inclined to introduce legislation should it get into power requiring companies to obtain shareholder approval at annual meetings for executive pay packages. It had also been examining changes in the Companies Act to make tougher corporate governance standards a Stock Exchange listing requirement.

But yesterday the shadow chancellor, Gordon Brown, stepped back from a statutory approach that would force companies to toe the line on corporate governance.

At a London conference to set out Labour's manifesto for business, he said that voluntary agreements brokered between institutional investors and boards of companies would be far more beneficial than statutory changes.

His comments were reinforced by Alistair Darling, the shadow chief secretary to the Treasury, whose portfolio includes corporate governance issues. He said the best way to improve standards and practices in boardrooms was through "cultural change". A number of institutions had begun to pressure companies to amend "imprudent" remuneration packages and board structures.

Senior Labour politicians have been saying privately for some time that a voluntary approach was likely to be favoured above one built on new legislation but this is the first time the party has openly rejected a statutory means.

The 26-page manifesto, *New Opportunities for Business*, makes it clear that Labour wants to build on the voluntary approach adopted by the Greenbury and Cadbury Committees and the successor Hampel Committee, chaired by the chairman of ICI, Sir Ronnie Hampel, who is looking at what further changes might be needed in corporate governance standards.

"An expert panel on corporate governance should be established with a broad membership to draw up codes of practice on key issues," the document says. It adds that Labour will want a full and early report from the Hampel Committee.

Comment, page 21

P-reg car sales fail to reach 500,000 mark

CHRIS GODSMARK
Business Correspondent

Sales of P-registration cars in August look set to show a disappointing increase of little more than 1 per cent over last year, when the industry announces the final figures today.

The statistics will also show a bad month for the traditional market leaders, Ford and Vauxhall, and a continuing boom in sales of imported cars.

Registration data, which was being collated last night, suggests that unless manufacturers dump thousands of cars on dealers at the last minute, around 475,000 new cars were sold last month, compared with 469,000 in August 1995. Manufacturers had predicted a much more buoyant August, with a forecast rise of around 5 per cent to 490,000.

The figures dash hopes that sales could surge through the 500,000 barrier for the first time since 1989. They also suggest the recent improvement in consumer confidence has not been sufficient to bring a sustained boost to the car market.

Ford had a particularly bad month with its share of the total market dropping to 18.5 per cent. Vauxhall's slice was just 13 per cent, with industry sources suggesting demand for the Vectra, the replacement for Cavalier, had not matched expectations. However, Rover's sales brought its share to around 10 per cent.

By far the biggest winner in August was Volkswagen, which registered 27,000 cars, grabbing 6 per cent of the entire market. VW has seen huge interest from private buyers in its Polo "super mini".

Alan Pugh, from the National Franchised Dealers Association, said: "If you price a product right people will buy it and Volkswagen are definitely pricing their cars right. They've corrected the main problem they had, which was that their cars were perceived as being too expensive."

Yesterday industry analysts suggested the outcome was not as bad as it seemed, partly because August this year included one less selling day than last year. "It still gives us the second biggest August ever. That takes us over 1988's total," said Mr Pugh.

Another factor was the lower number of so-called "pre-registrations". Manufacturers can inflate the statistics in the last few days of the month by registering cars to dealers, so they count as a "sale" in the data before they find a genuine buyer. On the penultimate day of August 1995, 45,000 cars were registered, 10 per cent of the month's total, though most had not probably been "bought".

"In a way it's a more rational August this year," said Jay Nagley, an expert on the car market with Marketing Systems. "The sales look more genuine this year. There's some evidence that Ford and Vauxhall have cut back on attempts to force the market and sales to rental companies are lower."

Peacock family may sell out to Booker

NIGEL COPE

Booker, the food distribution group, yesterday started a long-awaited shake-up of Britain's cash and carry sector when it made a recommended offer for Nurdin & Peacock, its beleaguered cash and carry rival, valuing the company at £264m.

The deal will give Booker 40 per cent of the UK cash and carry market though the company said it did not expect to run into competition problems with the Office of Fair Trading. Booker said the sector already faced

strong competition from the supermarket groups.

Booker's offer has the agreement of the founding Peacock family which controls a 28 per cent share. A hostile counterbid from SHV Makro, the Dutch group which holds a 14 per cent stake in N&P, is possible.

If the deal goes through it will result in around 1,200 job losses. Booker says 40 depots will close though these are likely to be some of the smaller Booker sites. The N&P head office, which employs 500 staff in London, will also be shut. Booker says the deal will be earnings enhancing within the first year.

It plans £10m of cost-savings in that year, doubling the year after. However, Booker's debts would soar to £400m compared to £90m of net assets. Booker says the debt level would fall by £100m after two years.

Charles Bowen, Booker's chief executive, said the deal would enable the combined group to offer more support to the independent retail sector. "Cash and carry is under pressure. Our customers are getting

squeezed more and more. We've got to do something to support them."

Mr Booker said he had been stalking N&P for two years but only heard in the past few weeks that the Peacock family might be interested in selling its stake.

Under the terms of the offer, Nurdin & Peacock shareholders will receive 14 new Booker shares and £154.53 in cash for every 100 N&P shares. Based on a Booker share price of 360.5p, this values each of Nurdin & Peacock's shares at 205p. There is also a cash alternative of 201p.

Nurdin & Peacock's shares rose 68.5p to 200.5p. Booker shares closed 22.5p higher at 383p.

Julian Hardwick, an analyst at BZW, said: "I think it's a good deal for both sides and the logic is pretty compelling. Booker will have a stronger base in the UK from which to expand internationally."

He said it was likely Booker would sell some of its underperforming food businesses.

Esco price war and Comment, page 21.

City kept guessing over rate cut

DIANE COYLE
Economics Editor

A tea-time meeting yesterday between Kenneth Clarke, Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Eddie George, Governor of the Bank of England, left the financial markets on tenterhooks over the possibility of a cut in base rates. This morning will present the Bank of England with its first opportunity to act on any decision taken by Mr Clarke at the meeting.

Minutes of the 3 July monthly meeting released yesterday confirmed that the Chancellor's and Governor's views about interest rate policy have diverged. If Mr Clarke has taken the plunge again, it will mark his most serious clash yet with Mr George.

Economists in the City were still divided yesterday about whether he would reduce base rates for the fifth time since December. Ian Shepherdson at HSBC Markets said: "These decisions are not predictable, but it is hard to see any real gain

to doing it now rather than around party conference or Budget time."

This view was reinforced by mortgage lenders signalling a reluctance to reduce mortgage rates again. A spokesman for Halifax, the biggest lender, said: "Mortgage rates are at a 30-year low and I don't think they have much further to go."

On the other hand, Paul Mortimer-Lee, chief economist at Paribas, argued that this month presented Mr Clarke with his last window of opportunity. "Time is running out. The Chancellor would like another rate cut and here is one of the last chances he has."

The Bank of England has made plain its opposition to additional reductions in the cost of borrowing, and suggested that increases will soon be on the cards.

According to the minutes released yesterday, Mr George said the quarter-point June reduction to 5.75 per cent had increased the danger that the Government would not meet its inflation target.

He said the forward-looking indicators of inflation such as surveys, money and credit growth and the housing market were stronger than they had been in June. The Bank "would advise strongly against any further interest rate cut on the basis of current evidence."

Mr Clarke acknowledged that he and the Governor remained "slightly apart", although he agreed that interest rates should remain unchanged in July. He also agreed that the economy was gathering strength - but at not too rapid a rate.

"If growth did accelerate to the point where the inflation target was being put at risk, there would be sufficient time to act prudently," he argued.



On the brink: A meeting between Ken Clarke (left) and Eddie George has left the financial markets on tenterhooks

Graduate

Graduate plus is the marketplace with editorial and recruitment targeted at both undergraduates and graduates with 2 - 3 years relevant experience

See page 23 - 27 section two

To book your advertisement call the Graduate Team on 0171 293 2312

Every Thursday in the THE INDEPENDENT section two

STOCK MARKETS					
Index	Close	Day's change	Change(%)	1996 High	1996 Low
FT-SE 100	3872.70	+16.80	+0.4	3918.70	3832.30
FTSE 250	4408.00	+20.00	+0.5	4568.00	4015.30
FTSE 350	1938.40	+8.50	+0.4	1980.00	1816.00
FT Small Cap	2164.75	+6.54	+0.3	2244.36	1954.08
FT All Share	1917.11	+8.22	+0.4	1938.24	1791.95
FT All Share	9648.77	-2.22	-0.0	9778.00	9082.94
Nikkei	20201.87	+3.72	+0.0	22665.80	19734.70
Dow Jones	11076.95	+119.77	+1.1	11594.99	10204.87
Hong Kong	2532.39	+21.82	+0.9	2583.49	2253.88
Frankfurt					

Source: FT Information

INTEREST RATES					
Index	1 Month	3 Month	6 Month	1 Year	2 Year
UK	5.50	6.00	7.32	7.88	8.04
US	5.51	6.09	6.33	6.18	7.10
Japan	0.38	0.625	2.38	3.02	-
Germany	3.09	3.31	6.40	6.39	7.16

BOND YIELDS					
Index	1 Month	3 Month	6 Month	1 Year	2 Year
UK	5.50	6.00	7.32	7.88	8.04
US	5.51	6.09	6.33	6.18	7.10
Japan	0.38	0.625	2.38	3.02	-
Germany	3.09	3.31	6.40	6.39	7.16

CURRENCIES					
Index	Close	Day's change	Change(%)	1996 High	1996 Low
£/\$	1.5685	-0.24c	-1.5476	1.5685	1.5476
£/DM	1.5656	-0.10c	-1.5490	1.5656	1.5490
DM/\$	2.3204	-0.70p	-2.2893	2.3204	2.2893
¥/\$	170.172	-1.184	-152.850	170.172	152.850
£/Index	85.6	-0.2	84.9	85.6	84.9

OTHER INDICATORS					
Index	Close	Day's change	Change(%)	1996 High	1996 Low
Oil Brent \$	22.23	+0.22	16.70	22.23	16.70
Gold \$	385.90	-1.05	380.30	385.90	380.30
Gold £	248.50	-0.30	245.75	248.50	245.75
Base Rates	-	-	-	-	-

business

Remoulded BBA shows its fibre

It is hardly surprising that BBA, the brake pads to nappy-liners group, was yesterday emphasising the importance of organic growth and bolt-on acquisitions. After its still-born attempt to break up the Lucas-Varity merger earlier this year, Robert Quarta, BBA's aggressive chief executive, had some ground to make up with City sceptics.

He need not have worried. Yesterday's figures for the half-year to June should have quelled any remaining doubts about Mr Quarta's record. The underlying performance was hidden by the last elements of his reshaping of the business. A £26.7m goodwill write-off on the sale of the Automotive Products clutch and brake business last time turned into an £11m write-back in the latest figures from the sale of the Duralay carpet underlay operation. But leaving one-offs to one side, there was a 19 per cent increase in profits to £72.1m in the period.

Having now largely completed the remoulding of BBA, Mr Quarta's task this year is to prove that the resulting business is capable of growth. The 24 per cent rise in turnover in the first half is early proof that it is.

Admittedly, Mr Quarta had some unspecified help from the first-time inclusion of Holvis, the Swiss group acquired last June. After disposals, that deal netted the Fibreweb business for BBA, turning it into the group's third-largest producer of non-woven fabrics for the likes of nappies, surgical use and filters. Stripping that out, the underlying sales increase was pared back to 5 per cent.

Even so, there is clearly still plenty to go for at BBA. Weeding out the underperformers has resulted in a further step change in margins, and even in the continuing operations, the return on sales has marched up 1.2 percentage points to 13.5 per cent in the half-year. The addition of Fibreweb and improvements to its pre-acquisition return on sales of 5 per cent helped continuing profits in effect double to £44.7m in BBA's industrial division. But given that Fibreweb's utilisation is still only 85 per cent of capacity, and with new applications for non-wovens appearing all the time, there should be more where that came from.

Elsewhere, despite its heavy exposure to the car industry, which accounts for around a quarter of group sales, BBA's brake linings business has much to commend it. The friction materials arm, Europe's leading manufacturer, shrugged off a tough six months for German car sales and, despite signs of a slowdown in the European market, the outlook is set fair. The DM20m (£8.45m) efficiency programme launched in Germany last year will be delivering in full from next year, but most excitement should come from the US business. From a standing start in 1991, that is on course to take 10 per

THE INVESTMENT COLUMN

EDITED BY MAGNUS GRIMOND

cent of the \$1bn-\$1.5bn market by the end of the decade.

The group now has firepower of up to £300m for acquisitions without recourse to shareholders. Full-year profits of £142m before exceptional gains would put the shares, up 11p at 334p, on a forward p/e ratio of 17. Hold.

Cadbury battles a drink problem

David Wellings bows out as chief executive of Cadbury Schweppes this week on the back of a decent set of half-year figures. His swan song results yesterday showed a 13 per cent rise in pre-tax profits to £231m in the six months to June, buoyed by a significant contribution from the Dr Pepper acquisition in the US.

The more interesting questions relate to what kind of business Mr Wellings's successor, John Sunderland, inherits and where he takes it from here. Cadbury Schweppes faces some challenging strategic issues. When the £62m sale of its half-share in the Coca-Cola Schweppes bottling joint venture is completed later this month, it will leave Cadbury Schweppes reliant on third-party bottlers and a distant third

in the cut-throat US soft drinks market behind Coke and PepsiCo, makers of Pepsi Cola. While the Dr Pepper brand is out-performing the US market, the Seven-Up citrus drink is finding the going tougher. It managed a 2 per cent increase in volumes in the first half, while Sprite, the Coca-Cola competitor, increased its volumes by a whopping 28 per cent, backed by a huge pre-emptive marketing spend designed to spoil Seven-Up's February re-launch.

Cadbury may have spent £351m on marketing in the first half compared with £297m in the same half last year, but its spending is dissipated across a wider portfolio of brands while its rivals concentrate on just a handful of products.

The confectionery business faces similar issues, battling against the likes of Nestlé and Hershey. Confectionery sales were up by 15 per cent, but trading profits edged up only 3 per cent and the margin fell by 1.3 percentage points due to a drive by Trebor Basset to increase volumes and market share.

On the plus side, the new business in Poland will break even this year, only its second of operation, while investment in China and Russia is continuing. Further expansion is likely to be through acquisitions. The problem is finding suitable targets. Of the asso-

ciated business, the 22.5 per cent stake in Camelot, the National Lottery organiser, yielded profits of £9m in the six months.

BZW is forecasting full-year profits of £580m. With the shares 8p higher at \$20.5p they trade on a forward rating of 15. Much will depend on how the US drinks market holds up, particularly the battle between Seven Up and Sprite. With rumours of a bid from Unilever or a US predator receding, the shares are only a hold.

Brammer on a roll in Europe

Brammer, the Altrincham-based distribution and rental group, is unusual for a British company with substantial overseas operations. Despite doing a third of its business abroad, it has no US or Far East subsidiaries, but concentrates instead on becoming a pan-European distributor in the single market.

It is a strategy that could leave Brammer exposed to the slowdown in large economies such as France or Germany as they whip themselves into shape for the arrival of a single European currency. But the evidence of the latest interim results suggests otherwise.

Pre-tax profits in the six months to June rose by 26 per cent to £12.8m on sales 15 per cent higher at £103m. True, growth rates in the period have slowed from the 50 per cent seen last year as trading conditions have become more difficult. But Brammer is clearly gaining as it consolidates its leading position by rolling out its distribution network across Europe, where it provides nuts and bolts and bearings and drive belts for just-in-time delivery.

The most recent example of moves to reinforce the business came in April when Brammer bought the 75 per cent of a Spanish distributor it did not already own for £10.5m. With £3.1m of net cash on the balance sheet, more acquisitions should follow.

Brammer is the European leader in testing and computer equipment, a market with good growth prospects as blue-chip customers such as BT, Siemens and Nokia increasingly outsource their information technology services. This division, which accounts for a fifth of profits, was bolstered in July with the acquisition of Hamilton, which specialises in the short-term rental of computer equipment in the Benelux countries, for up to £6.8m.

The shares have been strong performers this year, rising another 9.5p to 594.5p yesterday. "Clean" profits of £26.6m this year would put them on a forward multiple of 15. That looks undemanding and suggests they have further to run.

Tilcon deal gives CRH a new US building block

MAGNUS GRIMOND

CRH, the Irish building materials group, yesterday pulled off the biggest deal in its history with the \$329m (£212m) acquisition of the US quarrying and aggregates business of Tilcon from BTR, the industrial conglomerate.

The acquisition will create the biggest construction materials group in the north-eastern US, where CRH has a business, to add to the Irish group's leading position in the Rocky Mountain states of Utah, Nevada and Idaho. The deal also brings the proceeds of the disposal programme instigated at BTR by new chief executive Ian Strachan to £700m so far.

The cash purchase is being part-funded through a £100m share placing at 12.5p to 638.5p yesterday, while BTR's rose 2.5p to 259.5p.

The Tilcon deal means CRH has spent £184.05m on acquisitions this year and breaks new ground not only through its size but in that it is being done with a public company.

In the past, the Irish group has expanded through buying small privately-owned groups, but finance director Harry Sheridan denied yesterday that the Tilcon move marked a change in strategy. "We see it very much as a series of concurrent add-ons which complement our existing operation in the north-east. We don't see it as a huge acquisition, just part of our existing strategy to create strong regional groupings."

Mr Sheridan said CRH had previously targeted small private units because they were easier to check and resulted in better value. Tilcon satisfied both criteria.

The gross consideration for the Connecticut-based Tilcon operation is \$220m and CRH is assuming a further \$109m of debt with the business. But the final sale price will be reduced by \$50m of sales of businesses which are either non-core or being forced on the Irish group to satisfy competition authorities.

Together with a seasonal reduction in debt of around \$25m,



Don Godson: Strong position in north-eastern US

CRH chief executive Don Godson reckons the company is paying a net \$254m for Tilcon.

The business operates from 60 operations in nine states. The operations being retained produced 16 million tons of aggregates, 6 million tons of asphalt and 400,000 cubic yards of ready mixed concrete last year. After adjusting for disposals, that fed into operating profits of \$30.5m on sales of \$334m in 1995.

Mr Sheridan said the two north-eastern operations offered plenty of scope for rationalisation and there would be job losses. Despite the growing

number of disposals by BTR, analysts said yesterday the latest deal would not prevent the group announcing a dividend cut of around a third and lower profits when it unveils results next Thursday.

Mr Strachan said the disposal represented another important step in repositioning BTR's portfolio of businesses. The proceeds are to be invested in the remaining manufacturing and engineering operations.

CRH unveiled a 13 per cent rise in pre-tax profits to £164.1m for the six months to June. Turnover rose by a similar amount to £1.1bn.

"Does it really matter who's behind your travel insurance?"

A very down to earth question.

The words 'American Express' are understood around the world. That's important if you're abroad and you find you need medical attention, cover for lost baggage or personal property, compensation for travel delay or funding for legal expenses. So if you need emergency assistance or even pre-travel advice, our representatives are on call 24 hours a day wherever on earth you are. We offer a choice of competitively-priced annual or single trip policies that you need not be a Cardmember to take advantage of. You see, your travel insurance provider can make a world of difference.

To find out how we can help you do more with travel insurance, call 0800 700737

Insurance Services

Policy terms and conditions are available upon request.
American Express Services Europe Limited, Reg. Office, Portland House, 1 Stang Place, London SW1E 5BZ, Reg. No. 1833139.

UK to bear brunt of Lucas cuts

CHRIS GODSMARK
Business Correspondent

The UK operations of Lucas-Varity, the car parts and aerospace giant formed recently in a £3.2bn merger, are to bear the brunt of a restructuring programme involving around 500 job losses.

Just two months after the deal was unveiled, Victor Rice, the new chief executive who previously headed Varity, has already completed a review of management structures which will result in a potential cull of a

third of senior administrative jobs.

Mr Rice has outlined space for 100 senior managers, compared with the current total of 150. A spokeswoman said existing staff would undergo an "intensive selection process aimed at getting the best fit for the new roles."

A further 450 administrative jobs will be cut over the next few months, though final decisions about who will be affected have yet to be taken.

Those who did not fit into the new structure would not necessarily lose their jobs immediately, though Mr Rice has made it clear there are only a limited number of long-term posts available. The cuts are part of a drive to achieve annual cost savings of £65m over the next three years.

The staff reductions, which are likely to have a bigger impact on the Lucas side of the business, shift the focus of the company towards the US. Lucas has 250 head office staff whereas Varity already runs a leaner headquarters operation in the US with just 50 employees.

Lucas employs disproportionately large numbers of staff when compared with the stakes the two companies have in the merger. Lucas investors gained two thirds of the shares in Lucas-Varity, which starts trading on Friday, while Varity investors got a third of the equity. Yet Lucas currently employs 45,000 people worldwide, against only 10,000 for Varity.

The company yesterday announced its new executive team, with eight former Lucas personnel and six Varity directors including Mr Rice.

Damsels in undress cause great distress

CITY DIARY

JOHN WILLCOCK

John Major attended as Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1990 to mark a European Directive which opened insurance markets in the European union to Lloyd's.

Mr Rowland says that although the bell was actually rung by one of Lloyd's pink-coated waiters and not Mr

Major, the latter was the "official" ringer.

"You see what happens to people who ring the bell," the chairman said, referring to Mr Major's subsequent elevation to No 10.

David Newbigging, chairman of Equitas, added quietly: "If they can count."



Cadbury's results yesterday were the swan song for chief executive David Wellings, who is retiring to devote all his energies to his first love: ornithology in Majorca. Mr Wellings wants to help preserve wildlife on the island, which includes the rare Black Vulture (above).

News reaches us, however, of a damaging boardroom split at Cadbury. The chairman, Dominic Cadbury, likes going out and shooting magpies as a hobby. Mr Wellings is agitated at as fast as he is saving birds. Mr Cadbury is blasting them to pieces. Mr Wellings says, sorrowfully: "Every time he does that, I give him a bollocking."

British Gas and HFC are launching a multi-million pound joint venture called Goldbrand, whose first product will be a credit card called the Goldfish Card. Presumably it will only be available at fairgrounds.

Ward Thomas, the cheeky chairman of Yorkshire-Tyne Tees Television, has written to Channel 5 insisting that when their people turn up at his home to return his telly to receive the new channel, they will have to do the job out in the drive.

"To avoid any security risk I will not permit any of your operatives access to my house," writes Mr Thomas.

He then includes a form Channel 5 must sign and return, indemnifying him against damage or worsening of interference he may suffer as a result of the returning.

Channel 5 has written back to Mr Thomas, saying: "We regret that we cannot sign the attached form."

Robert Heald, head of customer services at Channel 5, goes on to assure Mr Thomas that all staff are fully trained in returning, that any complaints will be dealt with swiftly and that no one is being forced to accept a visit from a returner. Mr Heald concludes: "In the event that returning cannot be successfully implemented, a blocker can be fitted to exclude Channel 5 [and any associated interference]."

I call that 30-all. New balls, Mr Thomas?

هَذَا مِنَ الْأَصْلِ

City's policy of self-regulation lies in tatters



COMMENT

This kind of thing might have been understandable in old-fashioned, inadequately regulated, one-man bands. But Morgan Grenfell?

A few years ago our City regulators had a great idea. What's the point, they figured, in spending a lot of time and effort regulating those who are perfectly capable of regulating themselves. Much better, they thought, to concentrate scarce resources on the smaller, high-risk players, leaving the grown-ups, provided they can demonstrate adequate internal controls, to their own devices. That policy seems to lie in tatters today, with the shenanigans at Morgan Grenfell Asset Management ample demonstration that even the grown-ups cannot be relied upon to look after themselves properly.

The more that becomes known about this bizarre affair, the more serious the failure in internal control seems to look. This kind of thing might have been understandable enough in old-fashioned, inadequately regulated, one-man bands and essentially crooked fund management operations like Barlow Clowes. But Morgan Grenfell?

It transpires that quite a number of the unquoted investments were valued for the trusts by their own manager, Peter Young. While this is no doubt legal, you don't need to be trained in these things to realise that it is also highly questionable. Mr Young had a vested interest in seeing his trusts perform and therefore a clear conflict of interest when engaged in the valuation process.

Worse, we have been unable to find anyone who has ever heard of the Norwegian unquoted companies the trusts put their money into. This might be understandable

enough in a large economy with lots of businesses, but Norway is a country of just 4 million people. It stretches credulity that the financial community of such a closely knit country would not have heard about companies which supposedly were about to be listed on the stock market. The best interpretation that can be put on this is that Mr Young was operating way outside his parameters as a kind of loose cannon venture capitalist. The worst interpretation hardly bears thinking about.

But most worrying of all is that Mr Young's penchant for investing in companies no one had ever heard of went unchecked for so long. All over the City, fund managers and their trustees will be rethinking and re-examining their controls. The regulators too will have to take a second look at the strategy that allows big players to police their own affairs. For while in this case the parent bank has had the good grace to bail out the trusts, there will come a day when it makes sense even for a big player to cut and run.

Labour and Tories are hard to tell apart

As spin-doctoring conventions go, Labour's one-day conference for business folk yesterday was hard to beat. The bevy of Labour party press officers on hand to dole out copies of speeches and generally plug the line that business can trust Tony Blair was

only outdone by the extraordinary number of PR men and women in the audience. A quick count yielded 82 of them.

Turow in diplomats, trade unionists, academics and Labour MPs dragged into turning up to make the numbers look respectable and barely half the delegates were at might be called the cutting edge of industry and finance.

In some ways that was a shame since Labour had certainly fielded its top brass. Alongside the leader, there were no less than nine members of his shadow cabinet, including even the home affairs spokesman, Jack Straw. He was there to tell the business world what Labour would do about theft from companies and he wasn't talking about some of the latest L-Tips that have been dreamed up in the boardroom.

In other ways the low calibre of delegate was all too predictable since it was the same old fare that Labour has been serving up for the last six months - the sort of apple-pie and motherhood combination that could not conceivably cause anyone offence. Hands up all those in favour of low inflation, tight control of public spending, better education and backing for small businesses.

A few die-hards like Dixons' Sir Stanley Kalms will continue to spy reds under the bed but at this rate it is going to be difficult to insert a cigarette paper between Labour and the Tories on macro-economic policy come the election.

There will, Mr Blair tells us, be no return

to penal rates of taxation and a bottom rate that would make even Ken Clarke's eyes water. There will be no question of imposing Continental-style non-labour costs on Britain unless our employers want it. We cannot even be certain whether there will be a windfall tax now, while even the boardroom fat cats look like getting away with a voluntary code.

Much of business may harbour an instinctive dislike of Labour. But its difficulty on polling day may be distinguishing which party is which.

Booker and N&P made for each other

At first glance, Booker's marriage proposal to its cash and carry rival Nurdin & Peacock looks a rather odd union. The business of supplying Happy Shopper beans and loo rolls to local corner shops is a shrinking one. Independent retailers are being squeezed by the mighty supermarket operators and the cash and carry companies are finding themselves squeezed alongside them. It is a wonder anyone wants to be in the business at all, let alone expand in it.

The boring old cash & carry groups have tried all manner of things to perk up the market. N&P thought it had found the holy grail a few years ago when it launched Cargo Club, an attempt to mirror the huge cat

in America. The idea bombed and after a couple of years was abandoned.

The rationale of this deal is less to do with the market itself as our old friend, cost-cutting, and of course the advantages of eliminating your closest rival. Both companies are about to invest heavily in technology. Those plans can now be streamlined.

Indeed, Booker's and N&P's combined sales will be north of £4bn which is comparable buying power to a very substantial multiple. The combined group will also have stronger buying power and a stronger position in own brands.

In other respects, too, the companies look a neat fit. Booker is stronger in the North while N&P's stronghold, such as it is, lies in the South. Booker has a stronger position in supplying the catering trade while N&P has been struggling along with its convenience store partners. While this is undoubtedly a case of managing decline and using the cash thrown off by a mature business to invest in other areas, there's nothing necessarily wrong with such a strategy.

Booker has already established cash-and-carry businesses in Portugal and Poland and would like to expand elsewhere in eastern Europe. In these countries the smaller retailer and corner shop is still strong. The supermarket operators have yet to gain a stranglehold on food retailing. On the whole, the City likes the deal and the strategy. Unexciting it may be but you cannot fault the logic of it.

£100m twist in tail as Lloyd's sets bell ringing

PETER RODGERS
Financial Editor

Three rings of the famous Lutine bell yesterday marked the arrival of the Lloyd's insurance market in a safe port, after Anthony Nelson, the trade and industry minister, gave formal approval to the £3.2bn rescue.

But in a surprise late demand, Mr Nelson insisted that Lloyd's give an assurance that it is prepared to find up to £100m in the period to January 2002, to top up the £1.68bn reserves of Equitas, the new reinsurer company at the heart of the rescue.

Mr Nelson said the pledge was required in case interest earnings on Equitas's investments were lower than expected or there was a shortfall in contributions from agents or brokers.

David Rowland, chairman of Lloyd's, said: "Our regulators have driven hard bargains all the time."

He described the extra money as "one more piece of belt and braces that the DTI thinks necessary". But he de-

clined to say whether the names who are members of the market would have to pay.

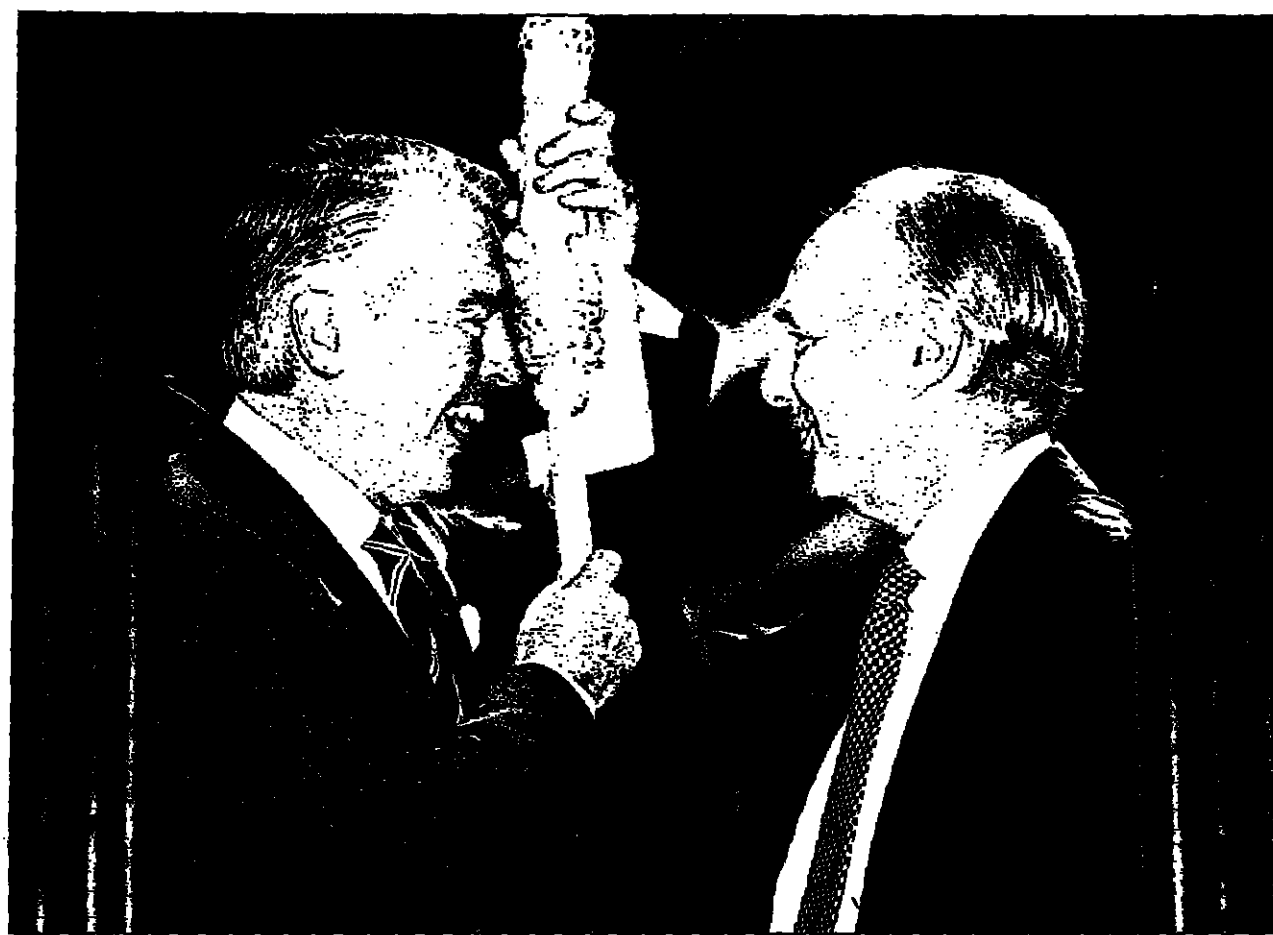
Mr Rowland was speaking after presiding over a variation on the celebrated Lloyd's ceremony of ringing the Lutine bell once for a disaster and twice for good news.

The first of the three rings was a reminder of the £8bn losses at Lloyd's and the other two were to announce the good news of the rescue.

Mr Rowland said: "I wanted to mark the difference. Once for sorrow and twice for joy was in the history of Lloyd's. This is a very special occasion."

"The most important thing for the market to remember is how close we came to not surviving, and the reasons for it," he told a packed meeting of thousands of Lloyd's professionals in the underwriting room in the insurance market's headquarters in Lime Street, to loud applause.

The bell has been rung more than twice on a previous occasion, though that was when it was rung four times in 1994 for the performance of a specially



Lloyd's finds a safe haven: Anthony Nelson (left) and David Rowland ring the Lutine bell

Photograph: Reuters

composed piece of music. The last time it was rung twice as a result of good news from the ocean was in 1981 when an overdue Liberian ship was found.

And the last time it was rung once for a maritime disaster was when wreckage of the tanker *Berge Vanga* was found in the South Atlantic in 1979.

As a result of the completion of the rescue, Equitas is to reinsure all Lloyd's pre-1992 li-

abilities, which were £14.7bn at the end of last year. Claims payments since then have reduced the total to about £11.5bn.

Mr Nelson said that since he conditionally authorised Equitas in March there had been an overall strengthening of its financial position.

The process of transferring money to finance these liabilities can now proceed, including trust funds held in the US

by the New York Insurance Department, which has also agreed the rescue and is to continue to be given Lloyd's financial data to monitor.

Yesterday the department approved a transfer of £3.5bn.

Mr Nelson said there would be a review of Lloyd's regulation, but it would be deferred until after the election. He expected changes to be made to the whole system of financial regulation and any reforms at

Lloyd's would have to be studied in that context.

Mr Nelson is to introduce new regulations in Parliament shortly which will clarify the regulatory position for games who wished to leave the market but have been unable to do so until Equitas starts operating.

Lloyd's is expected formally to pass its annual solvency test at the DTI in the next few days.

Channel 5 to seek close ties with BSkyB

MATTHEW HORSMAN
Media Editor

Channel 5 Broadcasting, owner of Britain's soon-to-be-launched fifth "free" television channel, is to seek close commercial ties with Rupert Murdoch's BSkyB in a move that could include cross-promotion, joint programme acquisition and even an agreement to distribute Channel 5 on satellite.

The strategy is aimed at improving Channel 5's coverage nationwide, currently forecast at about 70 per cent of homes. It would also allow Channel 5, backed by Pearson and United News & Media, to develop innovative ways of promoting the new service, perhaps by working jointly with BSkyB's huge marketing team.

In exchange, BSkyB would use its ties with Channel 5 to encourage the take-up of satellite dishes. In addition, it is expected that the satellite giant could redirect some of its £100m-plus annual advertising budget to Channel 5 to promote its 40 pay-television channels.

Traditionally, Sky has used cinemas, newspapers and radio to advertise its pay-television services, partly because of what Sky insiders regard as an uncooperative attitude from the commercial broadcaster, ITV.

David Elstein, chief executive designate of Channel 5 and

until last week the head of programmes at BSkyB, said: "I will be asking Sky if they are able to supply an Astra [satellite] transponder as it would certainly help us in our business plan."

He added that carriage by satellite would provide an opportunity for Channel 5 to get into more UK homes. "We would seek to in-fill in the areas beyond our own transmission masts, and we feel it ought to be an opportunity for BSkyB as well to sell satellite dishes."

Mr Elstein said he would also be talking with cable operators, and hoped to secure carriage deals to allow Channel 5 into cable homes in time for the launch on 1 January 1997.

BSkyB sources confirmed the plans to develop close links. It is expected that talks will begin in earnest in the next few weeks.

"There is no secret that there is a close working relationship between David Elstein and senior executives at Sky," a BSkyB insider said last night.

The *Independent* reported earlier this year plans by BSkyB and Channel 5 to bid jointly for programming.

The much more extensive co-operation pact now under consideration is seen as a logical next move, and will be directed personally by Mr Elstein on behalf of Channel 5.

Refuge puts off merger meeting

PETER RODGERS

Refuge and United Friendly yesterday postponed the key shareholders meeting on their £1.5bn merger from next Monday until 26 September after agreeing to improve the terms.

Two of the largest shareholders, Prudential and Britannia Assurance, are believed to be ready to accept the merger on the changed terms, but Refuge needs longer to work out the details.

However Perpetual, the fund management group with 7.5 per cent of the shares, said yesterday that new proposals were inadequate.

Refuge and United are to issue a note promising addition-

al payments to be made if the Department of Trade and Industry decides to allow some of the group's "orphan estate" of unclaimed life assurance assets to be given to shareholders.

Refuge said in a statement last night that it nevertheless believed that on the basis of its discussions with the DTI, there would not be additional value released for shareholders.

Sources close to the company said it still believed it might have won the vote on Monday, but there was no sense in upsetting shareholders.

Perpetual would also like to see a 50:50 split of shareholdings in the enlarged group instead of 53 per cent for United and 47 per cent for Refuge.

IN BRIEF

• French GDP declined unexpectedly sharply in the second quarter of the year. The fall of 0.4 per cent was due to weakness across the board, with consumption spending, investment, stocks and exports all down. Finance minister Jean Arthuis, due to present his budget next week, said conditions for growth were in place. He has forecast 2.25-2.5 per cent growth in the second half of the year.

• German orders increased in July for the fourth time in five months, confirming other recent evidence that economic recovery is under way. Pan-German orders were up 0.9 per cent, dominated by the consumer goods sector.

• The burden of taxation will have to shift further away from income tax towards taxes on spending, according to Mervyn King, the Bank of England's chief economist. Speaking in a personal capacity at a conference in Geneva, Mr King argued that new technology will make it harder to collect many kinds of tax revenues, but it will be easier to collect VAT. He suggested that taxing capital will be more difficult because of its international mobility.

• JD Wetherspoon, the pub operator, announced a 61 per cent surge in pre-tax profits to £13.1m for the year to 31 July. The company said it had opened 36 new pubs last year. In the current year, it said it had opened four more pubs, boosting its total to 150, with agreements to open an additional 100 sites. The final dividend is 5.9p, lifting the total payout from 8p to 9p.

• Olivetti's shares soared yesterday as the resignation late on Tuesday night of chairman Carlo De Benedetti raised hopes the company would emerge from five years of losses and abandon a management style that investors claim left them in the dark. "We are interested in seeing better stewardship of the company," said Mark Rogers, a fund manager at Nomura Capital Management, who last week met with other Olivetti shareholders to discuss ways of forcing the company to improve its performance. Olivetti shares soared as much as 73 pence to 799 pence (34p) in the first 10 minutes of trading on the Italian stock exchange before being temporarily suspended. Later, they were up 14 at 740 pence. *Bloomberg*

• The UK's gross domestic expenditure on R&D was £14.6bn in cash terms in 1994, up from £13.8bn in 1993. This was almost the same share of gross domestic product - 2.19 per cent compared with 2.20 per cent - and showed an increase in real terms of 3.7 per cent between the two years. Over the period, pharmaceuticals has overtaken aerospace to become the largest spending industry, spending £1.8bn in 1994 compared with the £1.1bn of aerospace. Chemical industry research remains, apart from these two, the biggest spender with over £800m, though if research on computer related activities were added to that on hardware this could be regarded as the next largest industry in terms of spending at £900m.

• Merrill Lynch is acquiring the Italian brokerage assets of Sweden's Carnegie Group. The acquisition of Carnegie Italia is the first in Italy for the US's largest brokerage. Merrill did not say how much it is paying. Earlier this year, Merrill paid \$29.7m (£19m) for FG Inversiones Bursatiles SA, Madrid's biggest broker. Last year, Merrill bought Britain's Smith New Court for \$842m. Stockholm-based Carnegie Group is 45 per cent-owned by its employees and 55 per cent by London-based Singer & Friedlander. *Bloomberg*

Shares hit as Tesco steps up price wars

NIGEL COPE

Tesco opened a new round in the supermarket wars yesterday when it announced plans to cut the price of more than 600 of its most popular lines. Tesco is investing £30m in its "Unbeatable Value" campaign and if a customer can find a comparable item cheaper elsewhere it will refund twice the price difference.

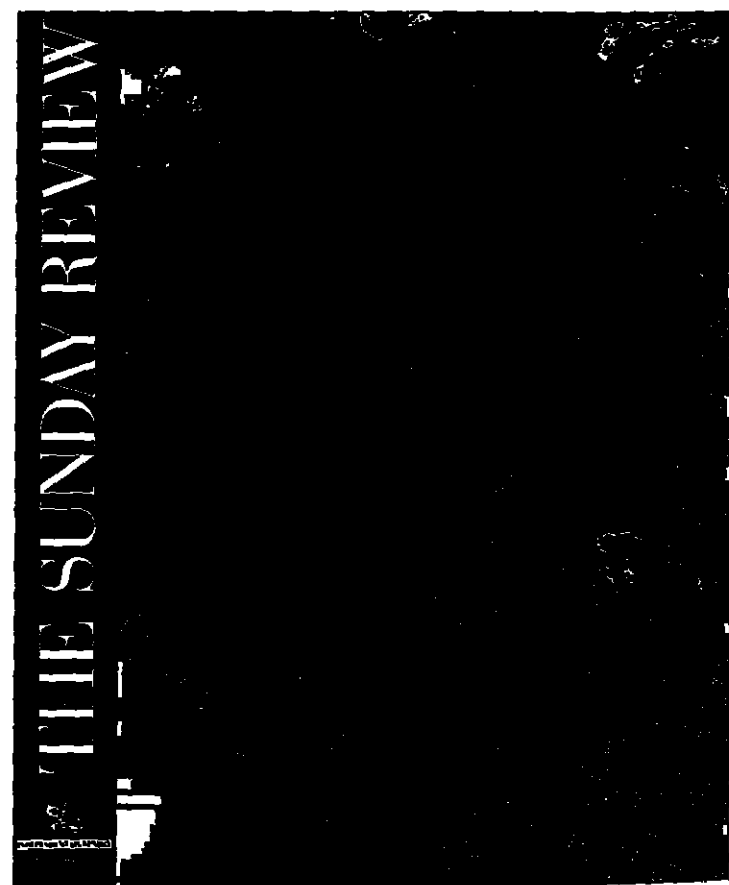
The move immediately sparked a reaction from Sainsbury's, which launched its autumn price savers campaign last week, including "buy one, get one free" deals on 700 items. "If there are any products cheaper at Tesco's, we will match them," Sainsbury's said.

Shares in all the supermarket groups fell as the City anticipated a reaction from rivals. Asda is tipped as the most likely to respond as it has styled itself as the lowest price supermarket. Tesco's shares fell 9p to 291p, Sainsbury's dropped 8p to 376.5p, and Asda's closed 4p down at 106p.

Tesco has struck while Sainsbury's is busy promoting its loyalty card and new figures yesterday showed it was losing ground to Tesco once more in the battle for market share.

Figures compiled by market research group AGB showed that in the four weeks to 25 August, Tesco's share of the UK market increased from 20.7 to 21.4 per cent, compared with the same period last year. Sainsbury's share fell from 19.1 to 18.6 per cent. Sainsbury's and Asda recorded strong gains.

Tony MacNery of NatWest said the move would weaken the sector and compound the problems of weaker competitors.



Whatever happened to the idyll of growing up - to those innocent, carefree days before child abuse, abductions and mass divorce?
Geraldine Bedell and Blake Morrison lead a major two-part investigation into the realities and myths of contemporary childhood

Plus: an exclusive interview with Alistair Cooke, and the *Independent on Sunday*/Bloomsbury Short Story Competition

IN THIS WEEKEND'S INDEPENDENT ON SUNDAY

RENEWAL
DUE IN
SEPTEMBER?
CALL US NOW.
0800 300 800

CONNECTIONS
SUN ALLIANCE

SUN ALLIANCE CONNECTIONS, LINDEN HOUSE, CHART WAY, HORSHAM, W. SUSSEX RH12 1JH. IF YOU WOULD PREFER NOT TO RECEIVE INFORMATION ON OTHER SUN ALLIANCE SERVICES, PLEASE MAKE US AWARE WHEN YOU CALL.

sport

Frentzen on fast track at Williams

Motor racing
DERICK ALLSOP

Heinz-Harald Frentzen was confirmed yesterday as Damon Hill's replacement in the Williams-Renault Formula One team.

In a brief statement, Williams said the 29-year-old German would be partnering Jacques Villeneuve next season - but made no mention of 1998.

It had been understood that Frentzen, who has had three seasons with Sauber, would be signing a two-year contract, but the second year may be subject to the team's discretion.

Frank Williams, the team director, also gave a three-sentence appreciation of Hill, who leads the World Championship by 13 points from Villeneuve with three races remaining.

"Damon has contributed greatly to the team both as a test and race driver - he has done an excellent job for us," Williams said. "I think his record speaks for itself, as very few drivers have ever approached his record of 20 wins in 64 starts. He will be missed by everyone at our Grove factory and we will wish him the best of luck for the remainder of this year, as well as the future."

Hill resumes his quest for the title in the Italian Grand Prix at Monza on Sunday. If he wins that race, and Villeneuve is no better than fourth, the Englishman's mission will be accomplished.

Jordan-Peugeot remain the favourites to sign the 35-year-old Hill for next season, although he has also been linked with a possible move to IndyCar.

Frentzen's arrival in Formula One's top team will have Germany's motor racing followers salivating at the prospect of his confronting Michael Schumacher.

In their earlier days, as members of the Mercedes "junior" sports car team, many rated Frentzen the quicker of the two drivers. He is, however, almost two years older than Schumacher, who developed rapidly and was more dedicated to his job.

Frentzen was more laid-back, enjoyed life beyond the race track and was left behind by Schumacher, Germany's idol, and Frentzen's girlfriend joined the flow, eventually becoming Mrs Schumacher.

Born in Mönchengladbach, Frentzen had a familiar grounding, starting in karts, becoming the German junior champion,

and graduating to cars. He advanced through Formula Ford 2000 and Formula 3 to join Eddie Jordan's Formula 3000 team, as well as the Mercedes organisation.

While Schumacher was emerging as the new golden boy of Formula One, Frentzen was plying his trade in Japanese Formula 3000 and sports car championships.

His break in Formula One came in 1994, when he returned to the Sauber-Mercedes camp for their assault on motor racing's premier category. However, Mercedes switched to McLaren after the first season and Sauber have failed to make a significant impact.

Frentzen's best result is third place, ironically at Monza last year, but presumably he has shown sufficient potential to assure Williams he is worthy of their car.

He is patently fast and his erratic form this season may have more to do with frustration than true ability. If he is good enough, he will have no need to drive over the limit next season.

All Germany will be watching with fascination - and probably no one with greater interest than Schumacher.



Happy to be Heinz-Harald: Frentzen moves to Williams next season Photograph: Empics

Davies puts in double effort

Golf

ANDY FARRELL
reports from Hanbury Manor

When Seve Ballesteros took over as captain of the European Ryder Cup team, he requested four wild card selections. It was rejected on the basis that, having won with two last year, the situation should remain unchanged. Mickey Walker, his counterpart for the women's Solheim Cup, had five choices and used them last Sunday to complete her team to face the Americans at St Pierre in two weeks time.

"The system has allowed me to pick the top 12 players in Europe," Walker said. "If I had 12 choices, it would have been the same team." Among the picks were three Swedes, Helen Alfredsson, Liselotte Neumann, and Cathrin Nilsmark, who holed the winning putt at Dalmahoy four years ago, and the Scots Kathryn Marshall and Dale Reid. After the effort of making the team, most are resting this week, but Reid, Irish Johnson and the world No 1, Laura Davies, begin the Solheim Cup countdown today here in Hanbury Manor. Yesterday, after-noon after, more dramatics in the Rail Classic in America on Monday. She birdied six of the last seven holes, including holing a bunker shot at the last, to get into a play-off. Michelle McGann halted her charge to a second successive win, but Davies' four victories on the LPGA Tour mean she has a \$110,000 lead at the top of the US money list. First or second prize this week would vault her above Alfredsson on the European Order of Merit.

Greenbrier, where the Americans were lucky, we have all wanted to get the cup back." Two years ago, the USA won 13-7.

"The Solheim Cup is the most important thing in women's golf," Walker said. "I feel passionately about it and so does every member of the team. For the wild cards I was looking for people who respond to the pressure of playing in the Solheim Cup, which is really unique. You want players you know can cope with that and be inspired and not just fall apart. Dale comes into that category."

Davies only arrived at Hanbury Manor yesterday, after-noon after, more dramatics in the Rail Classic in America on Monday. She birdied six of the last seven holes, including holing a bunker shot at the last, to get into a play-off. Michelle McGann halted her charge to a second successive win, but Davies' four victories on the LPGA Tour mean she has a \$110,000 lead at the top of the US money list. First or second prize this week would vault her above Alfredsson on the European Order of Merit.

Her quest to do the double means the Solheim Cup will be Davies' 11th event in a row. Walker is not worried. "Laura has proved that she's got the capacity to play golf and travel unlike anybody else in the world. If you told her to take three weeks off, she would be itching to get back. But although she plays a lot of golf, she does not play a lot of practice rounds. Laura wants to get the cup back as much as anyone."

Penny drops for Warrington

Rugby League
DAVE HADFIELD

In what looks less like clearing the decks than throwing the crew overboard, Warrington have transfer-listed 19 players.

The former Great Britain Under-21 full-back, Les Penny, heads the list of those invited to walk the plank at £120,000, with four others who have appeared in the first team this season - Mark Jones, Salek Finau, Paul Barrow and John Hough - all available at £35,000 apiece.

Barrow cost £80,000 from Swinton last year, while Jones and Jason Lee, listed at £20,000, are both current Welsh interna-

tionals. A former Great Britain player, Andy Currier, who has been on loan to South Wales for most of the season, is also available for a permanent transfer at £20,000. The club is also releasing the Australian hooker, Kris Watson. "It costs a lot of money to finance a first team player these days," said the Warrington chairman, Peter Higham. "If they aren't doing the business, they have to go."

Higham said that the club had incoming players lined up, including some from overseas, which explains the need to unload Watson and Finau, who hail from Tonga, from their import quota. Warrington are already estranged from their

most valuable player, Iestyn Harris, who is on the list at a world record £1.4m. The club has complained to the Rugby League over a statement that he will not be allowed to sign for a rugby union club, several of which have made substantial offers to him.

"We had the deal of the century lined up and we don't believe that the League has any right to interfere in club contractual business," said Higham. Robbie Paul, who is to guest with Harlequins during the winter, has signed a new four-year contract with the Bradford Bulls. Paul, the 20-year-old club captain who was voted

Stones Super League Player of the Year this week, will be at Odsal until 2000.

The St Helens forward, Chris Joynt, is to have a knee operation next week, after the Premiership final against Wigan, and could miss the early stages of Great Britain's southern hemisphere tour.

The Great Britain coach, Phil Larder, whose contract at Keighley ends after Sunday's Divisional Premiership final against Salford, has denied reports that he is to join Wigan as director of coaching.

Tony Chambers, a director of a Manchester property company, is the new chairman at Widnes, succeeding Jim Mills, who resigned last week.

Indurain 'to retire'

Cycling

Miguel Indurain, the five-times Tour de France champion, is likely to retire this year, say sources close to his Banesto team.

Indurain, 32, whose contract expires in December, failed to record a sixth successive win in the Tour this year but won gold in the time trial at the Olympics. Friends have been trying to persuade Indurain to change his mind, but it is believed the rider will announce his retirement in the next few days.

A Banesto spokesman said it was too soon to comment on Indurain's future, but his manager, Francis Lafargue, said

Indurain would not compete for another season just for the money. "Miguel is an honest man. His engine is as powerful as ever and he is only 32-years-old," Lafargue said. "But if he feels he can no longer be his former self, he won't do one more season just for the money."

The Banesto spokesman said: "We are focusing on the Tour of Spain and, when the moment comes to renew the contract, we will see."

Last month Indurain said he was not keen to race in the three-week Tour of Spain, starting in Valencia on Saturday.

"I didn't particularly want to do it but the team decides," he said. "Physically I am well, but mentally I'm not."

Allenby in the Alps

Colin Montgomerie is out to maintain his assault on the summit of the European rankings with victory in the Swiss Alps this weekend. The Scot struggled to joint ninth place on the doggy greens in the British Masters at Collingtree Park last week, and will be hoping for improved fortunes in the European Masters which starts today at Crans-sur-Sierre.

Montgomerie, aiming to finish as the European No 1 for the fourth successive year, needs a

win to go back to the top of the Order of Merit.

Ian Woosnam, an absentee this week, leads the money list with £510,258 - £68,000 ahead of second-placed Montgomerie with the Australian, Robert Allenby, who copied best with the Collingtree greens to emerge victorious, a further £35,000 behind.

Montgomerie and Allenby are playing together for the first two rounds as they tackle a course high up in the mountains - 5,000 feet above sea level.

PLAY FORMULA 1 DREAM TEAM

WIN a drive in a grand prix car

Formula 1 Dream Team is just like Fantasy Football: you pick and manage your dream grand prix team to score points over the season.

Even though the grand prix season is underway, it is not too late to join in: pit your wits against other enthusiasts and you could win our prize for the Italian Grand Prix. The champion of the 1996 grand prix season will win our overall prize, a drive in a Formula One car.

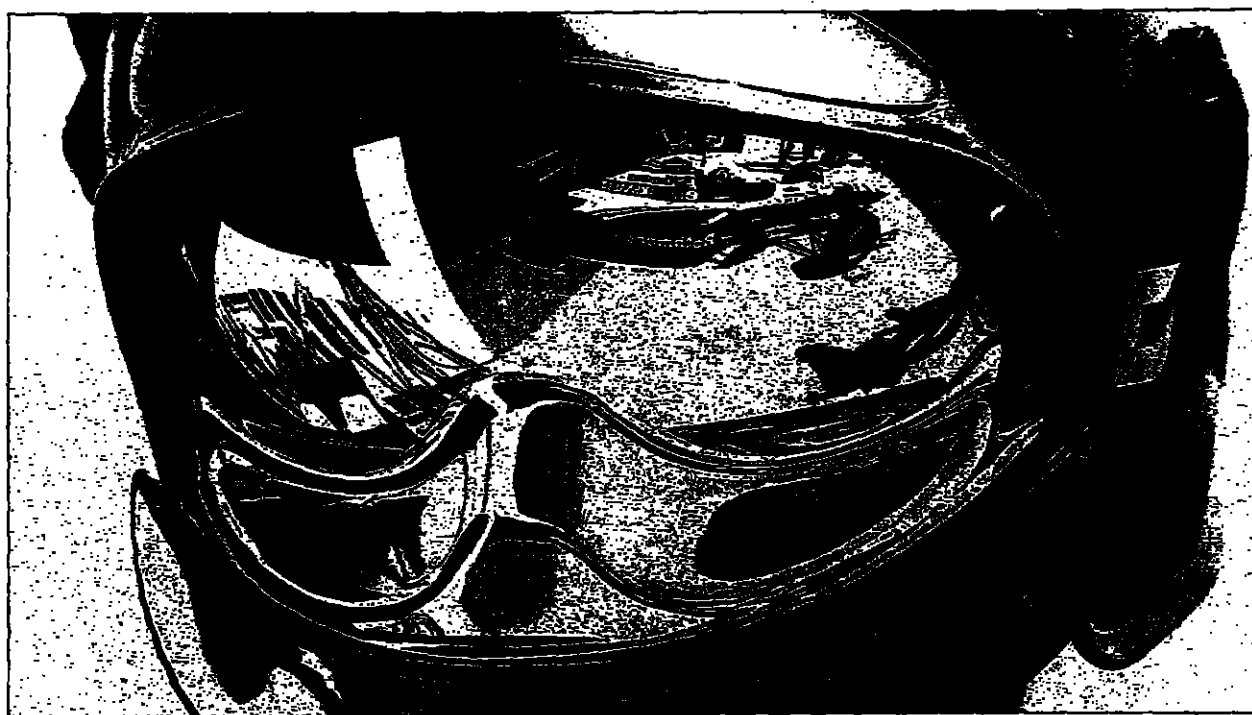
Your team must comprise three drivers, a chassis and an engine; your budget is £40 million. Make your selections from the grand prix shopping list (printed right); the only restriction is that your third driver must come from the £1 million category.

Details of how to enter are given on this page. Remember, there are prizes for the winning Dream Team in each individual grand prix so you can enter a different team for each race.

HOW YOU SCORE

Points are awarded per race to the top six finishers, based on the Formula One World Championship points scoring system (10, 6, 4, 3, 2, 1) but with an extra 10 points awarded to each of the top six finishers. All drivers are eligible to score for a top six finish but can also notch up extra points as follows:

- The fastest driver in race-day warm-up will collect six points, with five for the second and so on down to one point for the sixth quickest.
- Drivers score one point for each place they make up over their grid position. Points are not deducted by losing places.
- Five points are lost if your driver posts first retirement, four for second down to one point lost for the fifth retirement.
- If your driver makes the quickest pit-stop (from the entry of the pitlane to the exit) you gain five points.
- If your driver sets the fastest lap time in the race, you gain five points.
- If your driver receives a stop/go penalty, you lose five points.
- If your driver starts on pole position, you gain five points.
- The Independent will name a Driver of the Day after each race for a particularly impressive performance, worth five points.
- Non-qualification for a grand prix loses you two points. If a driver is on the FIA's published starting grid but fails to



Plus prizes to be won with every grand prix

DREAM TEAM TOP PRIZE

The Dream Team manager with the highest number of points at the end of the Grand Prix Championship season will win our top prize - a drive in a £250,000 F1 car. You will be flown to the 1998 season's opening race at the start of the season for the most exhilarating experience of your life. The exact specification in F1 courses and equipment all the summer and instruction you will need for a day driving F1 and other single seat cars.

ITALIAN GRAND PRIX PRIZE

The Dream Team manager with the highest number of points following the Italian Grand Prix will win a copy of the new book *British Grand Prix at Silverstone 1996*, signed by the race winner Jacques Villeneuve. Our winner will also receive 4 tickets for this year's Motor Show in October at the Birmingham NEC.

HOW TO ENTER

Choose your Dream Team from the shopping list on this page. Remember, you must choose three drivers (the third from the £1 million section), one chassis and one engine. You must not exceed your budget of £40 million.

Give your team a name and register it by ringing 0891 891 805.

You will immediately be asked the entry question: How many races are there in this year's Formula One World Championship?

To enter your Dream Team details you can use one of two methods.

Method 1 uses a tone phone that lets you

key in the code numbers of your driver, chassis and engine choices. The computer will check that your team falls within budget and is eligible.

Method 2 uses a non-tone phone and you give your details verbally. A budget check is not possible using this method.

When you have registered your Dream Team, you will be asked to predict the number of points this year's champion will notch up over the year. In case of a tie at the end of the season, the nearest figure to the champion's points will win the top prize. In the event of a further tie, the team that registered first will win.

Once you have registered your team you

will be asked for your name, address and telephone number. Your team selections plus your personal details will be played back to you and, when you confirm that they are correct, you will be given a PIN number.

This is confirmation of your entry and will enable you to access the score checking line. There is no limit on the number of teams an individual can enter, but only one team can be registered per call.

CHECKING YOUR SCORE

You can check your team's position at any time by calling 0891 891 806 and quoting your PIN number. If you want to know the individual driver, chassis and engine scores from the most recent race, call 0891 891 807. This line will also list the Top 50 Formula One Dream Teams.

Rules

1. All telephone calls are charged at 39p per minute cheap rate, 49p per minute at all other times, with a typical call to secure your entry lasting between five and seven minutes.

2. The deadline to be included in a particular race is midday the Friday prior to that race.

3. The judge's decision is final, no correspondence will be entered into and there is no cash alternative for prizes.

4. Employees of Newspaper Publishing Plc, Haymarket Publishing Ltd and all associated companies and their families are ineligible.

5. Entrants must be 18 or over and residents of the UK or the Irish Republic.

6. To be eligible for the main prize, you must hold a current driving licence, be no more than 1.95m tall and weigh no more than 220lbs.

7. All scores will be worked out according to the official FIA time sheets produced at the meeting. The values stated for drivers, engines and chassis bear no relation to real life.

8. In the event of a tie for the Dream Team Top Prize or for any of the individual race prizes, the team that registered first will win.

9. For lost PIN numbers please call: 0891 891 808. For our Helpline call: 01275 344183.

10. The Top 50 Teams Line, lists the top 50 teams from the last race. Both the Team Position Check Line and the Results & Top 50 Teams Line will be updated at 2 pm on the Monday following a race.

Shopping List

DRIVERS

- £25m
- 1 M Schumacher
- £23m
- 2 J Alesi
- £20m
- 3 D Hill
- £18m
- 4 G Berger
- £16m
- 5 D Coulthard
- £14m
- 6 E Irvine
- £12m
- 7 J Villeneuve
- £10m
- 8 M Hakkinen
- £8m
- 9 H H Frentzen
- £6m
- 10 M Brundle
- £4m
- 11 R Barrichello
- £2m
- 12 J Herbert
- £1m
- 13 M Salo
- £0.5m
- 14 P Lamy
- £0.2m
- 15 P Diniz
- £0.1m
- 16 U Katayama
- 17 J Verstappen
- 18 O Paris
- 19 L Badoer
- 20 R Rosset
- 21 A Montemini
- 22 G Fisichella
- 23 V Sospini
- 24 T Marques
- 25 F Lagorce
- 26 H Noda
- 27 T Inoue
- 28 M Blundell
- 29 J-C Boullion
- 30 K Brack
- 31 K Burt
- 32 E Collard
- 33 N Fontana
- 34 D Franchitti
- 35 N Larini
- 36 J Magnussen
- 37 A Prost
- 38 G Tarquini
- 39 K Wendlinger

CHASSIS

- £20m
- 40 Benetton
- £18m
- 41 Williams
- £16m
- 42 Ferrari
- £14m
- 43 McLaren
- £12m
- 44 Sauber
- £10m
- 45 Jordan
- £8m
- 46 Ligier
- £6m
- 47 Tyrrell
- £4m
- 48 Arrows
- £2m
- 49 Minardi
- £1m
- 50 Forti

ENGINE

- £26m
- 51 Renault
- £18m
- 52 Ferrari
- £15m
- 53 Mercedes
- £12m
- 54 Peugeot
- £10m
- 55 Mugen
- £8m
- 56 Ford V10
- £6m
- 57 Yamaha
- £4m
- 58 Hart
- £3m
- 59 Ford Zetec V8
- £2m
- 60 Ford ED V8

1996 RACE SCHEDULE

- Italian GP
- September 8
- Portuguese GP
- September 22
- Japanese GP
- October 13

*Not competing in Italian GP but may compete later

DREAM TEAM registration: 0891 891 805

TEAM POSITION CHECK LINE: 0891 891 806
RESULTS & TOP 50 TEAMS: 0891 891 807

هَذَا من الأناص

SPORT

Play INDEPENDENT FANTASY FOOTBALL
in tomorrow's paper

England players stand by their rebellious clubs

Rugby Union
DAVID LLEWELLYN

England's players and English Professional Rugby Union Clubs, the body now representing the top 24 clubs in the country, are united - that much is official and clear - in their stand against the Rugby Football Union, formerly known as the game's governing body.

After a meeting of 42 of the 43 England squad players, who

had boycotted yesterday's first national training session at the season, with Epruc at a hotel near Heathrow Airport, a joint statement left Twickenham in no doubt of the solidarity shown by the two parties.

However, it was not made clear just how this solidarity would manifest itself. After more than 90 minutes, this think tank of professional rugby produced the following statement: "The England squad of 43 [sic] have shown their support

for Epruc by attending a scheduled meeting today. Having heard their proposals, the England squad believe that the best way forward for the game is to agree in principle with their vision for the future. Epruc and the players have agreed to form a joint team to take this rapidly forward."

No one would explain any more than that. Most of the players slipped discreetly out of side and back doors in an effort to sidestep the media scrum.

Those who did emerge said nothing. But prior to the get-together, the Northampton captain, Tim Rodber, said: "We are being used as pawns. We would rather be playing or training. But there is so much going on that this meeting is necessary, to find out our position."

Clearly there are plans to build an infrastructure from which this Epruc-players combine will be able to set up domestic and European club competition and, eventually,

international matches. They mean business and calling the meeting was a smart move on the part of Epruc, which represents the top 24 clubs. The first England contracts expired at the weekend and Epruc seized the initiative to embarrass the RFU following the announcement of its breakaway last week.

Tony Hallett, the RFU secretary, expressed "disappointment" that the clubs had used the players as "a negotiating tool". He also pointed out that

if Epruc break away it will have to generate its own revenue without the help of the RFU. "We do not believe that they can match what can be done if we work together," he said.

Derek Morgan, the chairman of the RFU's National Playing Committee, said: "We greatly regret the absence of the players. No action will be taken against them. Unfortunately the players are caught in a situation not of their making. I cannot believe that anyone would willingly not

want to be involved with an England squad or ultimately to rule themselves out of contention for England."

Only one squad member was not at the meeting. Coventry's Robin Hardwick dutifully drove to Bisham Abbey to be confronted by the England coaching and management team, an empty pitch, no players and no real idea of what was going on. Hardwick, who has made 10 England A appearances, said: "I want to play for England. If

that means turning up at a session when I'm invited, I turn up. I had no instruction from Epruc or anyone else not to turn up. I had a letter from England asking me to attend and I had a phone call from Twickenham yesterday [Tuesday] saying that the session was on. I don't really understand what is going on. I just hope they get the whole thing sorted out. That is the heartfelt plea of a nation of rugby followers."

Scots stand firm on contracts, page 27

Wilkins shocks Wright

Football
ANDREW MARTIN

A fresh twist to the news that Ray Wilkins' two-year reign as Queen's Park Rangers player-manager had come to an end emerged last night when the club's new owner, Chris Wright, revealed that the former England captain had quit.

A statement released by the club earlier yesterday stated that Wilkins left "by mutual consent" following "lengthy discussions" with Wright and the chief executive, Clive Berlin.

However, Wright claims he was "shocked and surprised" at Wilkins' decision. He said: "Ray's a nice and genuinely caring person and he thought that for the benefit of himself and for the club it would be better to take the opportunity to hand over to someone else. There were no bad feelings. But having got over the shock of it we have to move on."

Wilkins had said after Sunday's home defeat by Bolton that he was due to attend his first board meeting since Wright, a music-publishing magnate, bought the club for around £10m at the start of the season. Wilkins, who has been striving to keep the coveted winger Trevor Sinclair at Loftus Road, even joked that this could mean bad news.

Wright, however, speaking on QPR Clubcast, said: "I thought we had a good meeting. Ray left with a clear mandate of which players he wanted to bring to the club, so I was shocked when he said he wanted to discuss the possibility of leaving."

"I was shocked and surprised at Ray's decision. It's very distressing but we have to deal with it and we will deal with it. We need to get the right man in to bring in the right players to take the club forward."

Nottingham Forest have played down reports that their manager, Frank Clark, is at the centre of a new inquiry into the activities of the agent, Rune

Hauge. Norwegian police are believed to have made a request to the Home Office to interview Clark over the transfer of Alf Inge Haaland to Forest.

The assistant manager, Alan Hill, said: "We don't know what all the fuss is about. We co-operated with the Norwegian police when they came over to make inquiries about the transfer and they were happy the entire deal had been done before Frank took over as manager."

Hauge has been charged with serious fraud over the transfers of Haaland to Forest and Pal Lyderson to Arsenal.

Wimbledon's owner, Sam Hammam, has confirmed that Dean Holdsworth has submitted a written transfer request. Yet the striker, valued at £4m but dropped for last Monday's 1-0 defeat at Leeds, remains in favour with Hammam, who added: "We still love him." He refused to say whether the request had been accepted.

Holdsworth, 26, joined Wimbledon for £750,000 from Brentford four years ago and scored 16 goals in all competitions last season. He has had an uneasy relationship with the manager, Ray Kinsey, for a while now and several times over the last two seasons has appeared on the point of being sold.

One club that had shown an interest in signing Holdsworth, Manchester United, had their European Cup ambitions bolstered by the news that Eric Cantona will be available for their opening Champions League tie against Juventus in Turin next week. United had expected to be without the Frenchman, as he was booked in a Champions League game against Gothenburg in November 1994 and was facing a one-match ban, which was due to be enforced next Wednesday.

However, UEFA, the European governing body, confirmed that the ban no longer counts as Cantona missed last season's UEFA Cup tie against Rotor Volgograd while serving his eight-month worldwide suspension.



Relegation to resignation: Ray Wilkins, who yesterday quit as Queen's Park Rangers' manager. Photograph: Dale Cherry

City fear for Hiley after knee injury

Manchester City's Scott Hiley was taken to hospital yesterday amid fears of a career-threatening cruciate ligament injury. Hiley went to see City's specialist about the knee injury he picked up in Tuesday's 2-1 win over Charlton Athletic.

City will check the results today but the forecast is gloomy for the full-back who has just recovered from a similar problem. He twisted his knee on the lush grass and is unlikely to figure again in this season's promotion campaign.

More bad news for City involved the centre-half Alan Kernaghan, who will be absent for a month with cartilage trouble. Asa Hartford, the caretaker manager, is now on the look-out for a couple of loan signings for the club - with his job possibly at stake. City want to keep Hartford in charge and improve his contract by doubling his wages, but the final decision will be delayed until after the next two games against Barnsley and Port Vale.

Kit Symons believes that City's luck may be on the turn for the better. The Maine Road captain admitted that City were fortunate to score twice in the last eight minutes against Charlton. Symons claimed that the turmoil of the last nine days since Alan Ball's departure has done little to help the club in their bid to regain their Premiership status.

"What has gone on at the club hasn't helped us, and against Charlton we looked very nervous," said Symons, who was installed as captain during the summer when Keith Curle was transferred to Wolves. But he added: "We are professionals and have got to just get on with it, and maybe luck is starting to go our way now and we have turned the corner. When you are not play-

ing well it's a case of just battling away. That's what we did against Charlton and we dug out a result from somewhere."

Uwe Rösler's penalty and Gerry Creaney's brilliant free-kick lifted City into the top 10 after a week when the club were making all the headlines off the pitch. Symons, a Ball signing from Portsmouth just over a year ago, said: "I know a lot has been said about the penalty decision which got us back in it, but we've had plenty like that go against us in the past so we were due that one and perhaps a few more."

"Now we can look forward to playing Barnsley, who are unbeaten and will be full of confidence from the way they have started the campaign. But we know that if we play as we can do, and if the crowd keep getting behind us, then we shouldn't be worried about anyone in this division."

West Ham have pinned a "not for sale" sign on Slaven Bilic in response to claims that their London rivals Tottenham have made a £2.5m bid for the Croatian centre-half.

Peter Storrer, the West Ham managing director, said: "If you have world-class players there will constantly be inquiries and, yes, we have had one for Slaven. But I can't say which club it is and anyway, we have turned it down. If Slaven left it would have to be on the basis that we wanted to let him go, and that is not the situation."

The Leicester manager Martin O'Neill is tracking Bradford's Dutch sweeper, Marco Sas. O'Neill watched the former Ajax prospect in action in midweek and thinks he would be ideal for the system he is using. Sas joined Bradford from NAC Breda on a free transfer in the summer but Chris Kamara now wants £1m for the defender.

Atletico turf out the worms

ELIZABETH NASH
reports from Madrid

Atletico Madrid, forced to play their first league match of the season on the pitch of their arch-rivals Real Madrid because their own had been destroyed by worms, will play their first match of the Champions League on French turf.

Uefa, football's European governing body, has insisted that next Wednesday's match against Steaua Bucurest must be played at Atletico's Vicente Calderon ground, since press

and security facilities at Real's Santiago Bernabeu stadium fall short of European requirements. So Spain's cup and league double winners have to replace their entire pitch with special grass imported from Bordeaux.

Faced with Uefa's ultimatum, Atletico hired two Californian grass experts who supervised the United States pitches during the World Cup finals, and who reckon the ravaged pitch can be restored in time. Their emergency solution is to transplant turf from France, which they say is of the right kind to correct the damage inflicted by a plague of worms that chomped through Atletico's reseeded pitch last month.

The operation must be concluded by Sunday, since the newly laid grass has to rest three days before withstanding the imprint of a footballer's boot.

Atletico's owner, Jesus Gil y

Gil, said: "Uefa told us that our ground met their requirements and Real's didn't, and that we had to play the Champions League there." The decision was "the best for everyone," he said, and thanked Real for offering their stadium.

In training sessions at the Vicente Calderon stadium last week, Atletico's players gouged up huge wedges of the pitch. The coach, Radomir Antic, pronounced the terrain unplayable, and expected it to be out of action for weeks.

Matias Almeyda, the Argentine international defender, began training with his Seville team mates yesterday and looks set to make his debut in Sunday's home game against Real Zaragoza.

The former River Plate player was received on Tuesday by 12,000 Seville fans in an atmosphere of euphoria similar to that surrounding the arrival of another Argentine, the World

Cup winner Diego Maradona, in 1992.

"It's like a dream. I could stay here all night," said Almeyda of the supporters' welcome.

Almeyda, 22, played a prominent part in helping Argentina to win a silver medal at the Atlanta Olympic Games and is a regular at full international level.

Rangers' forgotten man, Neil Murray, is being lined up for a move to the Cypriot side, Apoel Nicosia. The out-of-contract midfielder is wanted by Apoel who can sign him from Ibrox on a free transfer under the Bosman rules.

Murray is recovering from a minor knee operation and should be fit in a fortnight. Apoel are willing to wait but will need an answer soon afterwards. The home-grown Rangers product knows he has little chance of making the first team and could be ready to try his luck overseas.

Dundee in safe hands

Billy Thomson was a Dark Blue hero on Tayside yesterday after guiding Dundee into the Coca-Cola Cup quarter-finals at the expense of his old club, Dundee United. Hearts and Aberdeen also joined in the last eight despite enduring extra-time on Tuesday night at St Johnstone and Morton respectively.

The veteran goalkeeper Thomson, 38, saved twice in a penalty shoot-out at Tannadice as Jim Duffy's First Division side knocked out their Premier Division neighbours. United led through Owen Coyle but Jim Hamilton scored twice, once from the spot, before Gary McSwegan's equaliser ensured a shoot-out in a tie that was deadlocked at 1-1 after 90 minutes and 2-2 after extra-time.

"I'll get the credit for saving two in the shoot-out but I hold my hands up over the first goal, I sold that one," admitted Thomson, who blocked penalties from Coyle and McSwegan.

While Duffy singled out Thomson for special mention following the former United man's vital saves in the shoot-

out, he was not prepared to miss out any of his entire side. "Everyone was a real hero," he said. "There are very few games in which a manager emerges with nothing to complain about, but that was one of them."

The United manager, Billy Kirkwood, was not so happy. "My players let themselves and their team-mates down. Every one of them placed pressures on their team-mates at some point in that tie," he said.

Aberdeen, the Scottish Coca-Cola Cup holders, survived a scare in an incredible match at Cappielow against Allan McGraw's First Division leaders, Morton.

Billy Dodds scored twice to have the Dons apparently coasting until the referee, Mike McCurry, awarded Morton a controversial penalty. Derek Lilley converted and, after John Anderson equalised, Lilley fired the underdogs ahead.

Dodds spared Aberdeen's blushes to score his hat-trick with a late spot-kick and ensure another half hour. Extra time belonged to Dean Windass,

who scored four goals to see Roy Aitken's men safely through.

Hearts edged through in Perth with a 3-1 win after extra-time against St Johnstone at McDiarmid Park.

Colin Cameron and George O'Boyle traded goals before Darren Beckford and John Robertson put Hearts into the last eight. Robertson needed six stitches inserted in a head wound after being taken off on a stretcher during extra-time.

Hibernian eased the pressure on their manager, Alex Miller, as they came through against the Third Division leaders, Albion Rovers, at Cliftonhill.

Keith Wright put the Premier Division visitors ahead at Coatbridge after 18 minutes and a spectacular second-half effort from the midfielder Pat McGinlay wrapped up victory for the Easter Road outfit.

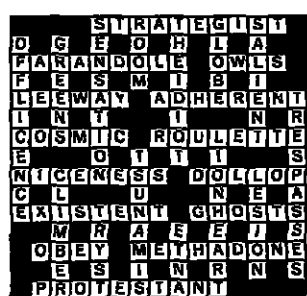
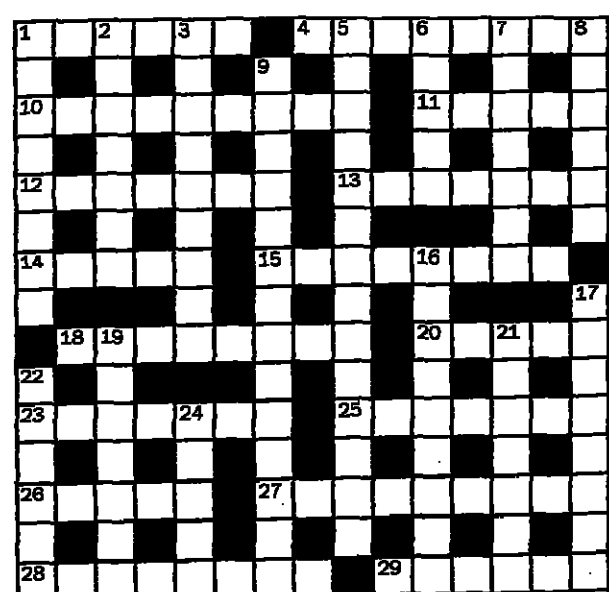
Partick Thistle also went through to the quarter-finals thanks to a 1-0 win over the cup specialists, Airdrie, at Firhill Park. Gareth Evans scored the vital goal in the first-half.

THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No. 3064, Thursday 5 September

By Mass

Wednesday's Solution



- ACROSS**
- Free in letter to use (6)
 - Lawyer's back (8)
 - The "Circus" line runs between two platforms (9)
 - Passive bathing? Right, without energy (5)
 - Nick, that is, replacing a workman (7)
 - Trick delicately made, squeezing East (7)
 - Frightful nightmare, ultimately drowning in lake (5)
 - Germany nurtures and embraces State utopians (8)
 - Offensiveness, such as aesthetes deplore? (3,5)
 - Strains back - about year in a state (5)

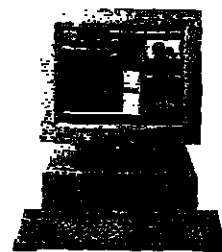
- Some toxicant I generate? (7)
 - Meal, camper's last, by a rolling river (7)
 - Puff with hint of orange zest (5)
 - Back door left swinging? One should stop the car (9)
 - Monkey tricks bull (8)
 - Parties, as presented by certain of the weeklies (6)
- DOWN**
- Race round city in operation taught criminal? Symmetrical fixture (7)
 - Damage English spruce in hollow (9)
 - What can one see in an empty house? (5-9)
 - This girl's usually stoned (5)

Published by Newsprint Publishing PLC, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL, and printed at Mirror Colour Print, St Albans Road, Watford. Back issues available from Historic Newspapers, 01988 840370.

Thursday 5 September 1996 Registered as a newspaper with the Post Office

MORSE

Put your Plans on ICE.



Oracle designs its business applications and databases to optimise the features of Sun Microsystems' Enterprise servers.

They are also 'Web-enabled', meaning that Oracle software can be used to develop new Intranet applications. Even existing Oracle applications can be easily migrated to the Web.

It is part of what Oracle and Sun call 'ICE' - Internet Centric Excellence. And it is why these two companies are setting the pace in Internet / Intranet computing.

Call us. Our consultants can explain how you can exploit this technology.



Morse Computers 0181 232 8686